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THE WORLD'S BEST NEWS & FACTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

NEWS
Ballerina takes her final bow
p5

READING
Announcing this month's book pick!
p23

AMAZING
Cake Picnic comes to California
p3

November 7, 2025 • Vol. 6, Issue 290 • $5.99

Making sense of the world

THE WEEK Junior

THE BEST MAGAZINE FOR CURIOUS KIDS

Sounds FISHY!

Scientists discover thumps, honks, and grunts as they listen to a symphony under the sea p10

A PLACE FOR REPORTERS
An indoor swimming pool that was installed in the White House in 1933 was covered over in 1970 to create the Press Briefing Room.

The White House after the demolition of the East Wing

Fun at the White House

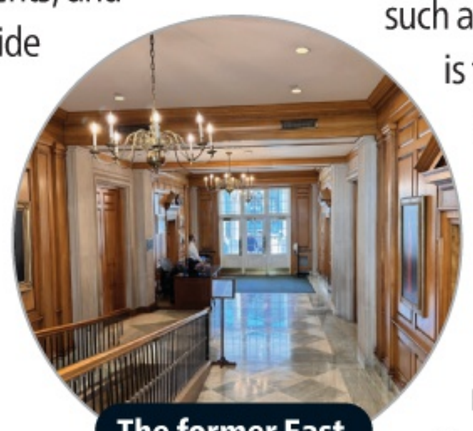
Several Presidents have had recreational elements added to the White House. Some installed outdoor play areas for their children, including a trampoline (John F. Kennedy), tree house (Jimmy Carter), and swing set (Barack Obama). Franklin D. Roosevelt added a movie theater, and Richard Nixon created a billiards room.

East Wing of White House torn down

On October 20, workers began tearing down the East Wing of the White House. A large ballroom will be built in its place. The construction is one of the largest and most controversial changes in the building's history.

What was the East Wing?

The East Wing was built in 1902, during Theodore Roosevelt's administration, as an entryway for guests arriving in carriages. Located on the opposite side of the White House from the West Wing, where the offices of the President and his staff are located, it housed the main visitors' entrance, offices for the First Lady and her staff, a department that handles formal events, and military and legislative offices. Outside the East Wing, the East Colonnade and Jacqueline Kennedy Garden connected it to the rest of the White House. "If the West Wing is the mind of the nation, then the East Wing is the heart," First Lady Betty Ford is reported to have said.



The former East Wing lobby

Why was it torn down?

In July, the White House announced plans to build a 90,000-square-foot state ballroom near the East Wing. The new space will accommodate about 1,000 people and will be nearly double the size of the White House itself, which is about 55,000 square feet. President Donald Trump said the addition was necessary because the largest entertaining space in the White House could hold about 200 people and larger groups had to be hosted in tents on the South Lawn. The renovation's estimated cost of $300 million is being paid for by wealthy donors and dozens of companies, including Amazon, Google, and Meta. At the time of the announcement, Trump said the East Wing would not be affected by the construction, which turned out to be untrue.

Why is the change significant?

Although many Presidents in the modern era have redecorated the White House or added features such as wheelchair ramps or elevators, this is the largest change to the exterior of the building since Harry Truman's administration. From 1948 to 1952, Truman oversaw a major renovation because the building had structural problems and was at risk of collapsing. This is also the first time in White House history that a major portion of the building has been torn down to make way for something else. And typically, a federal agency that oversees renovation and construction of government buildings would have to give approval of the project before demolition could begin. The White House did not submit plans for the ballroom in advance.

How did people react?

Many people, ranging from architects to ordinary citizens, expressed shock and anger at the demolition. Historian Gregory Smoak said, "It is a historic building. It's part of our heritage. It's the people's house." Carol Quillen, head of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, a nonprofit created by Congress in 1949, said the White House should have followed proper procedure. "We are deeply concerned that the...proposed new construction will overwhelm the White House itself," she said. Others said allowing companies and private donors to pay for the renovation could be a conflict of interest. Trump officials said the White House was exempt from laws or rules restricting construction and called the ballroom "a bold, necessary addition." Supporters of the project said previous Presidents have made changes to the White House and Trump can do the same.

What will happen next?

With demolition complete, construction will begin on the ballroom. The White House expects it to be finished before Trump's term ends in January 2029. The White House Historical Association said it has preserved and stored many artifacts from the East Wing and created a digital and photographic archive of the space. More about the White House throughout history can be found at the association's site, whitehousehistory.org.

GETTY IMAGES; WHITE HOUSE HISTORICAL SOCIETY; JOHN F. KENNEDY PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM/NARA

Number of rare whales increases

Conservation experts announced on October 21 that the population of the North Atlantic right whale had increased, which was good news for the critically endangered species. There are now an estimated 384 right whales in the wild, which is up from 376 last year. This year, 11 calves were born, including four to mothers having their first calves.

The whales live in the coastal waters of the Atlantic Ocean. They were heavily hunted by humans until the 1960s, when bans on commercial whaling went into effect. Right whales are still at risk, however, and are often injured by fishing gear and collisions with ships. Between 2010 and 2020, their population decreased by 25%.

Experts were encouraged by the recent increase but said North American right whales need ongoing protection. During the winter, pregnant right whales migrate to the waters off the coasts of Florida and Georgia to give birth. Conservationists said it would take the birth of about 50 calves a year for the population to rebound, but the whales are less likely to reproduce when they are injured.

A North Atlantic right whale

MALALA YOUSAFZAI
A MEMOIR
FINDING MY WAY
YOUNG AUTHOR
Malala Yousafzai's first memoir, I Am Malala, was published in 2013 and has sold nearly 2 million copies.

Malala Yousafzai and her latest book

New memoir by Peace Prize winner

Malala Yousafzai, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, activist, and advocate for girls' education, released her second memoir, *Finding My Way*, on October 21. The book covers Yousafzai's recent life, including her mental health struggles.

Yousafzai was born in Pakistan in 1997. When she was 11 years old, an extremist group called the Taliban banned girls from attending school. Yousafzai spoke out against the ban in speeches, blog posts, and television appearances. When she was 15, members of the Taliban shot her in an attempt to silence her, but she survived.

The attempt on Yousafzai's life made news around the world. She and her family settled in the UK, and she continued her activism after her recovery. On her 16th birthday, she spoke before the United Nations (organization of 193 nations), calling for education for all children. Her work helped end Pakistan's ban on girls going to school, and she later opened a girls' school there.

Today, Yousafzai runs the Malala Fund, which focuses on expanding girls' access to education worldwide. She received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014, at age 17, becoming the youngest winner of the prestigious award. She graduated from Oxford University in 2020 and is now married.

In *Finding My Way*, Yousafzai writes about life beyond activism, including the challenges of being in the spotlight and being criticized on social media. She shares her experience with depression and anxiety and how therapy helped her. "I wrote this book for anyone who has felt like they don't belong, who yearns for love and connection, who seeks to find their way in the world," she said.

IT'S AN AMAZING WEEK FOR...

FINDING A HIDDEN GEM

An Indiana man found a 2.71-carat white diamond at Crater of Diamonds State Park in Arkansas. Officials at the park, where visitors can dig for gems and keep what they find, said it's the fourth-largest diamond found this year.

The diamond

Norbert

A PIG ON WHEELS

Norbert the pig set a record for fastest pig to skateboard 10 meters (32.8 feet), covering the distance in 11.32 seconds. Norbert's owner, Vincent Baran, taught his 175-pound pet to ride by tempting him with bananas and peanuts. "He looks like a natural on the board," Baran said.

SHARING SWEETS

The Cake Picnic in San Francisco, California, drew 2,000 guests and 2,068 cakes of every shape, size, and flavor. Attendees were required to bring a whole cake and could sample the other offerings. The event's creator, Elisa Sunga, said she started the picnic "simply because I wanted to eat a lot of cake."

Some of the cakes

ON THE COVER: GETTY IMAGES (5); ALAMY; UBISOFT; ON THIS PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (3); COURTESY THE PUBLISHER; ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, HERITAGE AND TOURISM; GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS BOOK

Mikie Sherrill
Jack Ciattarelli
Winsome Earle-Sears
Abigail Spanberger
SAVING THE DATE
In 1845, Congress passed a law designating the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November as Election Day.

Next year's election

Election Day 2026 will be a midterm election, which is held halfway through a President's four-year term. In Congress, all 435 seats in the House of Representatives will be on the ballot, along with 33 seats in the Senate. Governors in 36 states will be chosen, and all states will hold state and local races.

Candidates prepare for Election Day

As Election Day approaches on Tuesday, November 4, candidates are making their final pitches to voters. People across the US will be electing leaders at the state and local level, and some will vote on proposed laws or changes.

What is this year's election?

In 2028, the US will choose a President and other national, state, and local positions. Next year, in 2026, the midterm elections will be held (see box above). This year, some significant races are taking place, but overall there are fewer on the ballot.

What races are being held?

New Jersey and Virginia are electing a governor. In New Jersey, Mikie Sherrill (Democrat) is running against Jack Ciattarelli (Republican). In Virginia, Winsome Earle-Sears is running as a Republican. The Democratic challenger is Abigail Spanberger. This is the first time in Virginia history that both candidates are women, and the winner will be the state's first female governor. Several major cities are electing mayors. The biggest of those races is happening in New York City, which has a population of about 8.5 million. The candidates are Zohran Mamdani (Democrat), Andrew Cuomo (Independent), and Curtis Sliwa (Republican). Races for local legislatures and other offices are also taking place throughout the US.

What else are people voting on?

In California, Proposition 50 is on the ballot. The measure would allow the state's Congressional map to be redrawn to form different districts (geographical areas used to elect lawmakers). If it passes, the redistricting could make it easier for Democrats to win more seats in the House of Representatives (one half of Congress, the branch of government that makes laws) during the 2026 election. The measure was introduced after Texas redrew its map earlier this year, making it easier for Republicans to win House seats.

What will happen next?

Candidates will attend last-minute rallies, give speeches, and ask people for their support. For some races, early voting is open and mail-in ballots can be cast in advance of Election Day. The results of some races may be announced after the polls close on the evening of November 4. The winners of close races may not be known until later.

WORD OF THE WEEK

YOGA

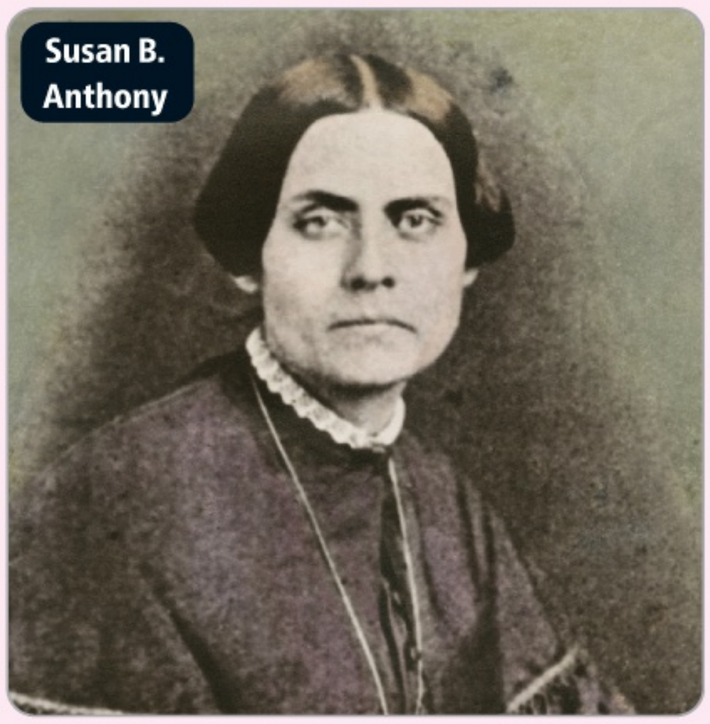
The word "yoga" comes from ancient Sanskrit, a language from India that is thousands of years old. Its root is a word meaning "union" or "joining together." Originally, yoga was intended to connect an individual spiritually with the divine. Today, the principle of yoga is the joining of the mind and body through breathing, stretching, and meditation.

THE WEEK IN HISTORY

November 5, 1872

Susan B. Anthony votes illegally

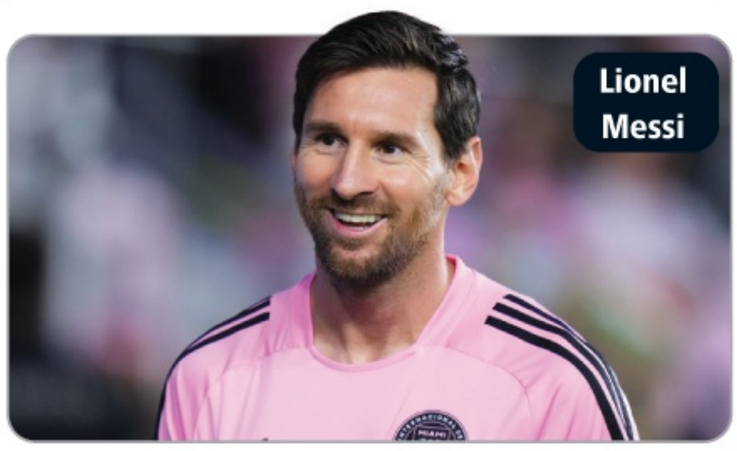
On November 5, 1872, Susan B. Anthony (1820–1906) voted in a US Presidential election. She was arrested and fined $100 because it was illegal for women to vote. Anthony knew that but voted anyway to bring attention to the cause of women's rights. In 1920, the 19th Amendment was added to the Constitution (highest US law), granting women the right to vote.



The statue of Rosa Parks

Statues unveiled in Alabama

Two statues, one of Rosa Parks (1913–2005) and another of Helen Keller (1880–1968), were unveiled at Alabama's state capitol in Montgomery. Both women were born in Alabama, fought for justice, and inspired change. Parks, who was Black, refused to give up her bus seat to a white passenger, helping to spark the civil rights movement. Keller, who was deaf and blind, spoke up for people with disabilities, as well as women and those in need.



Lionel Messi

Lionel Messi to stay in Miami

Soccer star Lionel Messi has signed a contract to extend his time playing for Inter Miami, a Major League Soccer (MLS) team, through 2028. Messi joined Miami in 2023 and helped MLS set a new attendance record in 2024. He won the league's Most Valuable Player award in 2024 and is a finalist for the award this season. "Since I arrived in Miami, I've been very happy," Messi said.

A Labubu

Labubu to join famous parade

The 99th annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, set for November 27 in New York City, will have a new float featuring Labubu, the popular plush collectible toy made by Pop Mart. The float will also feature other Pop Mart characters, such as Mokoko. The parade, which will air live on NBC to 50 million viewers, will include 31 balloons, 21 floats, and numerous performers.

STAR OF THE STAGE
Misty Copeland made her Broadway debut in 2015 in the musical *On the Town*.

Misty Copeland

Ballet legend gives final performance

Misty Copeland, the first Black woman promoted to principal dancer of the American Ballet Theatre (ABT), gave her final performance on October 22 at Lincoln Center in New York City. She became the top-ranked dancer of the ballet company in 2015, and the evening celebrated her groundbreaking career.

Copeland, age 43, grew up in California and began dancing at age 13. In 2001, she joined ABT's main company and was the only Black woman among the 80 dancers. Her breakthrough came in 2012, when she performed the title role in *Firebird*, becoming the first Black American to dance the part and earning widespread acclaim for her performance.

During her 25-year career at ABT, Copeland performed many of ballet's most famous roles. She also gained recognition as a best-selling author with her memoir *Life in Motion* and her picture book *Firebird*. In 2021, she founded the Misty Copeland Foundation to expand access to ballet to underserved communities in New York City.

Her final performance was part of ABT's fall gala. One of the featured performances was *Romeo and Juliet*, with Copeland as Juliet opposite Calvin Royal III, ABT's first Black male principal dancer in 20 years. Guests included media personality Oprah Winfrey, who said Copeland "redefined who belongs, who gets to be seen, and who gets to lead."

Misty Copeland in 2005

Copeland received standing ovations, and her young son came onstage to give her flowers.

In the coming years, Copeland said she will focus on her foundation as well as another goal—to "make real change in how stories about dance are told." She is developing a film adaptation of *Variation,* a novel about a ballerina whose life is changed by an injury, and will continue to write *Bunheads*, her children's book series that follows a girl named Misty as she discovers ballet.

THE WEEK'S SILLIEST HEADLINE

"Sea otters are stealing surfboards in California. Again." ***The New York Times***

ROSALIE O'CONNOR/ABT; GETTY IMAGES (4); AP; ON LEFT PAGE: INSIDERNJ.COM; U.S. NATIONAL GUARD; CONGRESS.GOV; GETTY IMAGES (3)

Around the world

Damage in St. Catherine, Jamaica

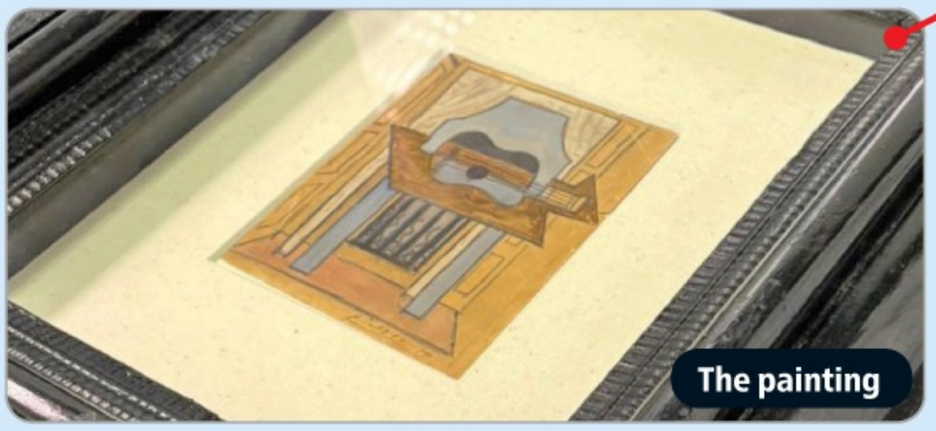
Jamaica
Powerful hurricane strikes

Hurricane Melissa hit Jamaica on October 28 as a Category 5 storm, the strongest ever to hit the island. With torrential rain and wind speeds up to 185 miles per hour, it caused floods and damaged homes, schools, hospitals, roads, and bridges. When *The Week Junior* went to press, at least seven storm-related deaths had been reported in Jamaica, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. Melissa was also set to hit Cuba and the Bahamas.

At the party

Bogotá, Colombia
Women enjoy a special celebration

On October 24, a group of 29 women ages 60 to 85 enjoyed a quinceañera, a tradition in Latin American cultures that celebrates a girl's 15th birthday. The Sueños Hechos Foundation organized the event for women whose families weren't able to afford a quinceañera when they were teens. Wearing gowns and tiaras, the celebrants rode in a limousine and danced. "This is the happiest day," said Rosalba Casas, 72.


The painting

Madrid, Spain
Missing Picasso painting found

A missing painting by Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) has been found. *Still Life with Guitar*, worth about $700,000, was left near a building instead of being loaded into a van to be taken to an exhibit. A resident saw the wrapped package and took it home for safekeeping, thinking it belonged to a neighbor. After hearing about the missing art, she opened it and called the police.

Reykjavik, Iceland
Mosquitoes arrive

Iceland is no longer mosquito-free after three of the insects were found near the capital. Experts think a warming climate may have attracted them. The Arctic is heating up four times faster than the rest of Earth, and Iceland experienced record temperatures this year. Experts said the country will continue to be monitored for mosquitoes.

A mosquito

Ghana
Cloth is protected

A traditional cloth called kente has been granted "geographical indication protection." This means that only cloth woven in specific communities in Ghana can legally be given the name kente. The designation is expected to protect the cultural value of the hand-woven cloth, whose patterns have often been copied outside Ghana, and help weavers in the country earn money for producing a genuine product.

People wearing kente cloth

AP; GETTY IMAGES (5); ALAMY (3); SHUTTERSTOCK

Around the world

Catherine Connolly

Ireland
New president chosen

Catherine Connolly won Ireland's presidential election, defeating opponent Heather Humphreys with a record 63% of the vote. Connolly ran as an independent, but left-wing parties supported her as a symbol of change. While the role of president is ceremonial and does not shape laws, Connolly said she will be a "voice for peace" and inclusion.

A road full of crabs

Christmas Island, Australia
Red crabs march to sea

Millions of red crabs on Christmas Island are making their annual trip from their forest burrows to the shore, where they breed. Triggered by the first rain of the wet season, the crabs march across the island with help from residents, who use rakes and other tools to guide them away from danger. The crabs will mate once they reach the beach, and females will deposit their eggs into the sea in mid-November.

Sanae Takaichi

Japan
First female prime minister elected

Sanae Takaichi made history on October 21 when she was elected as the first female prime minister of Japan. Takaichi, age 64, is a member of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and has served in Japan's parliament (similar to Congress) since 1993. She has also been an author, a television host, and a drummer in a heavy metal band. Takaichi has said that she intends to boost Japan's economy and security.

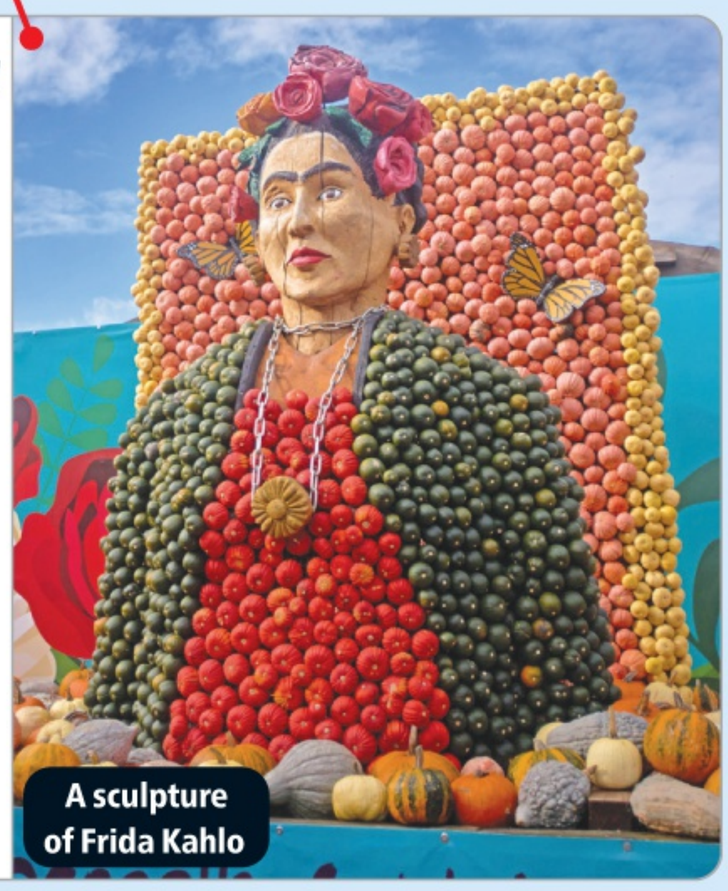
Striking workers

New Zealand
Workers take part in "mega-strike"

About 100,000 workers from across New Zealand went on strike (refusal to work as a form of protest) on October 23. It was one of the largest strikes in the country's history, involving teachers, doctors, nurses, and public employees. Many schools were closed and healthcare facilities reduced their services as protesters demanded better pay, conditions, and resources.

Klaistow, Germany
Pumpkin festival

Klaistow Farm held its 22nd pumpkin festival, and this year's theme celebrated powerful women. The event featured 15 huge pumpkin sculptures of famous women such as the artist Frida Kahlo, the Egyptian queen Cleopatra, and the fictional character Pippi Longstocking. Thousands of visitors came to view more than 100,000 of the decorative vegetables and taste treats made from pumpkins.


A sculpture of Frida Kahlo

Should we still use nicknames?

They might be well-meaning, but that doesn't mean everyone likes them.

What you need to know

- A nickname can be a variation of a person's real name, like Will or Bill for William, or be totally unrelated.
- Some US Presidents and First Ladies have had nicknames. Dwight D. Eisenhower was known as "Ike," and Claudia Johnson was "Lady Bird."
- Experts say that if someone gives you a nickname you dislike, you should tell them to stop using it.
- People from different cultures or age groups may have different attitudes toward nicknames.

What's in a name? When it comes to nicknames, so many things! Some are a mashup of a person's name, like ARod for baseball great Alex Rodriguez, while others are a variation on someone's last name, like Murph for Murphy or Sully for Sullivan. In many cases, nicknames can refer to a person's other qualities, like calling someone "Curly" because of their hair or "Flash" because they're fast. Recently, however, journalists have noted a decline in the use of nicknames because people are realizing that not everyone likes them, even when they're meant to be affectionate or funny. What do you think? Should we still use nicknames?

Yes—they're a sign of affection

Nicknames are fun and creative and often honor a person's accomplishments. Many people even take pride in them—it's hard to imagine LeBron James minds being called "King James" or Bruce Springsteen dislikes the nickname "The Boss." But nicknames aren't just for the rich and famous. They're also used for friends and family to show affection or closeness. For instance, parents might call their breakfast-loving kid "Waffles," or best friends could call each other characters from their favorite movie. And many people aren't crazy about their given name. A nickname lets them choose something that fits their personality better.

No—they're too risky

You should call someone by a nickname only if they ask you to. When other people give someone a nickname, even in good fun or as a compliment, that person might actually dislike it or be embarrassed by it but find it hard to speak up. And nicknames stick! It's difficult for someone to get other people to stop using a nickname that has caught on, and it can follow them all their life. Besides, most nicknames are naturally informal. That makes them inappropriate in some settings, like school or work. Let's face it: Nicknames are old-fashioned, and it's time they went away. We all have real names—let's use them.

YES Three reasons we should still use nicknames

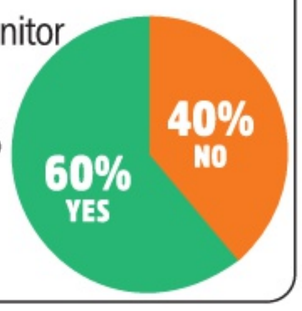
1. **They're a fun way to highlight someone's accomplishments or good qualities.**
2. **Nicknames between friends and family are a sign of affection, closeness, and shared experiences.**
3. **They can give people a chance to choose a name that suits them better than their given name.**

NO Three reasons we should not still use nicknames

1. **They might seem harmless and well-meaning, but people might not like them or may find them hurtful.**
2. **It can be really hard to shake a nickname, and it can last a person's whole life.**
3. **Short or silly nicknames just aren't appropriate in some environments, like the classroom or workplace.**

LAST WEEK'S POLL

Last week, we asked if parents should track their children. More than half of you said it's OK for parents to monitor their kids' location: 60% said yes, and 40% said no.



What do you think?

Now that you've read a bit more about this issue, visit kids.theweekjunior.com/polls so you can vote in our debate. Vote YES if you think we should still use nicknames or NO if you don't. We'll publish the results next week.

The goal of the big debate is to present two sides of an issue fairly in order to stimulate discussion and allow our readers to make up their minds. The views on this page do not reflect those of *The Week Junior*, and the page is not funded by third parties.

Champion on the ice

Speed skating star Jordan Stolz is gearing up for the Winter Olympics.

At age 21, Jordan Stolz is already a star in the world of competitive skating. He is a long-track speed skater, which means he races long distances around a 400-meter ice oval, aiming for the fastest time. Now Stolz is ready to represent his sport and Team USA in February at the 2026 Milano Cortina Winter Olympics in Italy.

At the 2025 ISU World Cup

Stolz grew up near Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and began skating at age 5 on the frozen pond in his family's backyard. He was inspired by watching US short-track skater Apolo Ohno at the 2010 Olympics on TV. Stolz trained at the Pettit National Ice Center, where many Olympic skaters train. He quickly stood out in competitions for his speed and skill.

In 2022, at age 17, Stolz made his Olympic debut in Beijing, becoming the third-youngest American ever to compete in men's Olympic long-track speed skating. He made history in 2023 by becoming the first male skater to win gold in the 500 meters, 1,000 meters, and 1,500 meters at a single World Championship. He did so again in 2024 and added four more gold medals at the 2025 Four Continents Championships, setting many track records.

"Dedication is everything," Stolz said in a Team USA interview. "I basically make my life around skating and training—and just pushing myself as much as I can." Looking ahead to the 2026 Games, Stolz says his goal is to build endurance in addition to speed.

His advice to young skaters? "When it gets hard, don't give up," he said. "If you keep pushing past that, you'll eventually start realizing it was totally worth it."

Jordan Stolz

SPORTS HISTORY
The first known speed skating race was held in the Netherlands in 1676.

Stretching for joy

Charlotte Chopin, age 102, is a yoga influencer. She started practicing at age 50, became a teacher 10 years later, and has now led classes in the small French village of Léré for more than 40 years. She first received national attention in 2022 after appearing on France's version of *America's Got Talent*. Two years later, India honored her with a civilian award for promoting yoga worldwide. She told *The New York Times* that the secret to her long and happy life is simple: "I don't have too many problems—I have an activity that I like."

Charlotte Chopin

Mychal Threets

A literary advocate

Mychal Threets has been named the new host of *Reading Rainbow*, the beloved children's show that inspires a love of reading. Originally hosted by LeVar Burton from 1983 to 2006, the award-winning series reached millions of children each week. Threets, a librarian in California known online as "Mychal the Librarian," gained popularity for his joyful social media posts about library life and book recommendations. Now leading the show's reboot on YouTube, Threets says his mission is to uplift library communities. "I was practically raised by libraries," he told *USA Today*.

OVERHEARD

"I realized that poetry is the same thing as music."
Canadian pop star Tate McRae on discovering songwriting at the age of 6

GETTY IMAGES (4); ANTOINE CASTAGNÉ/THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX

HEAR THIS!
Fish have ears inside their heads and an organ under their skin to sense vibrations.

Blackbar soldierfish can make noises.

Fish climb a waterfall

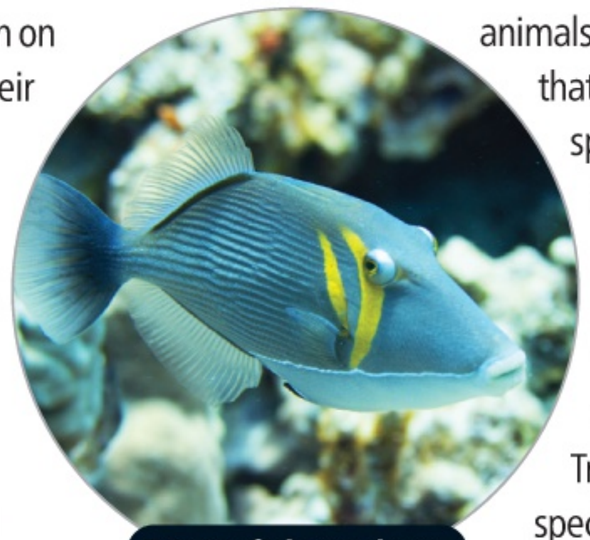
Scientists have released a video of thousands of bumblebee catfish climbing up a waterfall in Brazil. The fish, which are a few inches long, appeared to flip their tails to push themselves forward. Like some other fish, they may also be able to create suction to attach to rocks.

A bumblebee catfish

Finding out what sounds fish make

Barking dogs, roaring lions, and trumpeting elephants might steal the spotlight as their noises ring out through the air, but did you know fish make sounds too? Using a new tool, scientists have begun listening in on the symphony under the sea. Their recordings have captured a variety of thumps, honks, grunts, and burps made by different species of fish.

The tool, developed by a group called the FishEye Collaborative, is a 360-degree underwater camera with special microphones. With the combined video and audio recordings, experts can pinpoint the source of the sounds they capture. Scientists have now used the camera to observe coral reefs off the coast of Hawaii's Big Island and the island of Curaçao in the Caribbean.



Triggerfish can drum with their fins.

The recordings show that fish are far from silent. But unlike humans and other land-based animals, they don't have lungs full of air that would allow them to sing, speak, whistle, or roar. Instead, they use other techniques.

Parrotfish, which have two sets of teeth, click their jaws while scraping tasty algae off the reef for a snack. Triggerfish slap their fins on specialized scales to produce a drum-like thump. Glasseye snappers rattle their swim bladders, gas-filled organs that keep them afloat, to create a rapping noise that could serve as a form of social interaction with other fish. Blackbar soldierfish pulse special muscles in their backs, causing their ribs and swim bladders to vibrate and produce sound. This could help the solitary soldierfish chase away other fish that try to enter their hiding spots.

The group has uploaded its fish sound videos to an online library at fisheyecollaborative.org. Eventually, the team hopes its recordings can be used to train artificial intelligence (AI, when a computer imitates human learning) to identify fish species underwater via their sounds. Similar technology exists in apps that detect bird species.

The scientists also hope their technique will help experts protect fish, keep track of important species, and monitor the spread of invasive fish that could harm native wildlife. FishEye founder Marc Dantzker said it could be "a powerful tool for ocean conservation."

PLACE OF THE WEEK

Maroon Bells, Colorado

Maroon Bells is thought to be the most photographed location in all of Colorado. A large, glassy lake reflects two snow-striped, 14,000-foot-tall mountains named Maroon Peak and North Maroon Peak. The bell-shaped mountains, about 10 miles from the ski town of Aspen, began forming more than 300 million years ago. The red color they're named for comes from the weathering of a mineral called hematite. Mule deer, red foxes, bighorn sheep, and beavers are often seen along the many hiking trails around the lake and on the mountains.

A red fox

BIRDS OF A FEATHER
When a goose mates with a swan, their offspring is known as a swoose.

A blue jay (left), a green jay (right), and the hybrid

Hybrid bird surprises scientists

A photo taken by a woman near San Antonio, Texas, has led to the discovery of an unusual bird. According to researchers at the University of Texas at Austin, the feathered phenomenon is a cross between a blue jay and a green jay, two species that split from a common ancestor about 7 million years ago.

Blue jays typically live in the eastern US, while green jays are native to Mexico and South America, but as global temperatures have risen over the past 10 years, the birds have moved into new areas. Now both species can be found in San Antonio, where their expanded ranges overlap. Experts think a female blue jay mated with a male green jay to create the first wild hybrid of this kind.

The new bird, which some people are calling a "grue jay," has blue feathers on its back like a blue jay and a dark spot over its eye like a green jay. It can make sounds similar to the calls of both types of jays. Experts say this may be the first time a hybrid bird species has been created as a result of changes to the climate. More creatures like it could exist in the future.

Animal of the week: European hamster

Three times larger and feistier than pet hamsters, European hamsters are critically endangered worldwide. A few thousand are living in Ukraine, and a scientist at the Kyiv Zoo has begun breeding and releasing the rodents to boost the population.

- **LIFESPAN:** Up to 8 years in the wild
- **HABITAT:** Grasslands in Europe
- **SIZE:** 8 to 14 inches long, about 1 pound
- **DIET:** Mainly seeds, vegetables, and some insects
- **FUN FACT:** If they have to swim, they can inflate their cheek pouches like floaties.

Good week / Bad week

Mountain gorillas

Uganda's mountain gorilla population has increased, partly due to tourism. People pay hundreds of dollars to see the endangered gorillas in the wild, so locals are saving habitats and many hunters have switched to being trackers and tour guides.

US rivers

Experts say rivers across the US are experiencing abnormally high water temperatures, which puts stress on aquatic life and harms water quality. Rivers in the Northeast and the Rockies have warmed the most, heating up faster than the air.

Ask an expert: "Why do snails leave a slime trail?" Olivia, 8, New Zealand

Jann E. Vendetti
Mollusk curator, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

Though snail mucus is mostly water, it has components that remain after the snail has moved along. Snail slime can be slippery, sticky, and strong, which helps snails and slugs slide over and stick to all kinds of surfaces. It can also help other snails find them by following their trail.

Do you have a question for an animal expert? Send it to *hello@theweekjunior.com*. Find out more about the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County at nhm.org.

GETTY IMAGES (4); ALAMY; ON LEFT PAGE: ALAMY; RONY SUZUKI; GETTY IMAGES; BRIAN STOKES (CENTER), TRAVIS MAHER/CORNELL LAB OF ORNITHOLOGY/MACAULAY LIBRARY (LEFT) AND DAN O'BRIEN/CORNELL LAB OF ORNITHOLOGY/MACAULAY LIBRARY (RIGHT); ALAMY

A creative tradition of

Discover how an ancient custom became a global art form.

The practice of origami is popular around the world and has been used in everything from arts and crafts to space engineering.

What is origami?

Folding a tulip

Origami is the art of folding paper into two- or three-dimensional shapes without cutting, gluing, or taping. It is often created with special paper that is thinner than standard printer paper. There are many different styles of origami, such as modular, which involves making multiple units of an origami structure that can then be pieced together. Other techniques involve making simple structures with minimal folds or creating objects for everyday use, like boxes or paper clips. There is also wet folding, which involves dampening the paper slightly to make it softer, which allows more rounded shapes to be sculpted, and then letting the paper harden as it dries.

Origami in Japanese art

Origins of origami

Little is known about origami before the 15th century. But scholars do know that paper was invented in China in 105 CE and that the craft of papermaking reached Japan by 610 CE. The practice of paper folding emerged sometime after that. The oldest known reference to origami is from a 1680 poem by Japanese writer Ihara Saikaku. During Japan's Edo Period (1603–1868), paper became less expensive and origami became more widespread. The art of folding material similar to paper was growing outside Japan as well.

WORD ORIGIN

The term "origami" comes from the Japanese word *ori*, meaning "folding," and *kami*, which means "paper."

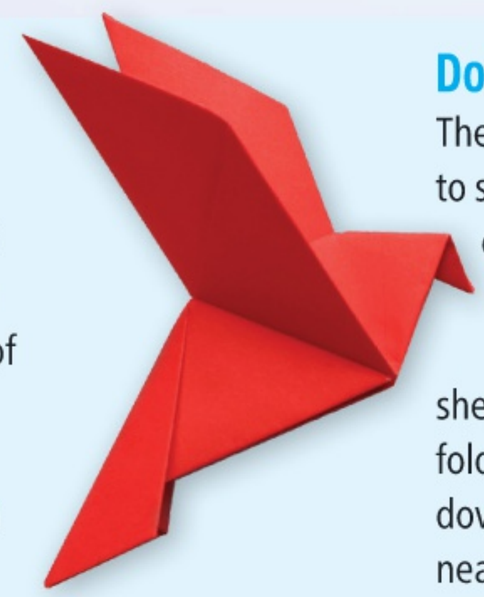
COLOSSAL CRANE

The world's largest origami paper crane was made at a Japanese university and had a wingspan of more than 268 feet.

In Japanese tradition, the practice of folding 1,000 paper cranes (as pictured above) is known as *senbazuru* and is believed to grant a wish or healing.

Popular designs

The art of origami has been used to make thousands of different shapes. Here are three of the most common examples.



Dove

These birds are often used to symbolize peace. An origami dove (left) is a simple design that can be made with a single sheet of paper and a few folds. The largest origami dove ever created was nearly 10 feet wide.

SHUTTERSTOCK (4); GETTY IMAGES (3); SIPA USA VIA AP

paper folding

DID YOU KNOW?
People who make origami crafts are often referred to as "folders."

Star

Pointed stars like this one with eight points (left) are another popular origami design. They are also known as "ninja stars" because they resemble ninja throwing stars, or *shuriken*, which means "sword that's hidden in hand."

Butterfly

The butterfly (left) is an origami design that is considered perfect practice for those who are new to the art of folding paper. Sugaya Elementary School in Japan achieved a world record in 2024 by making a display of 42,516 butterflies.

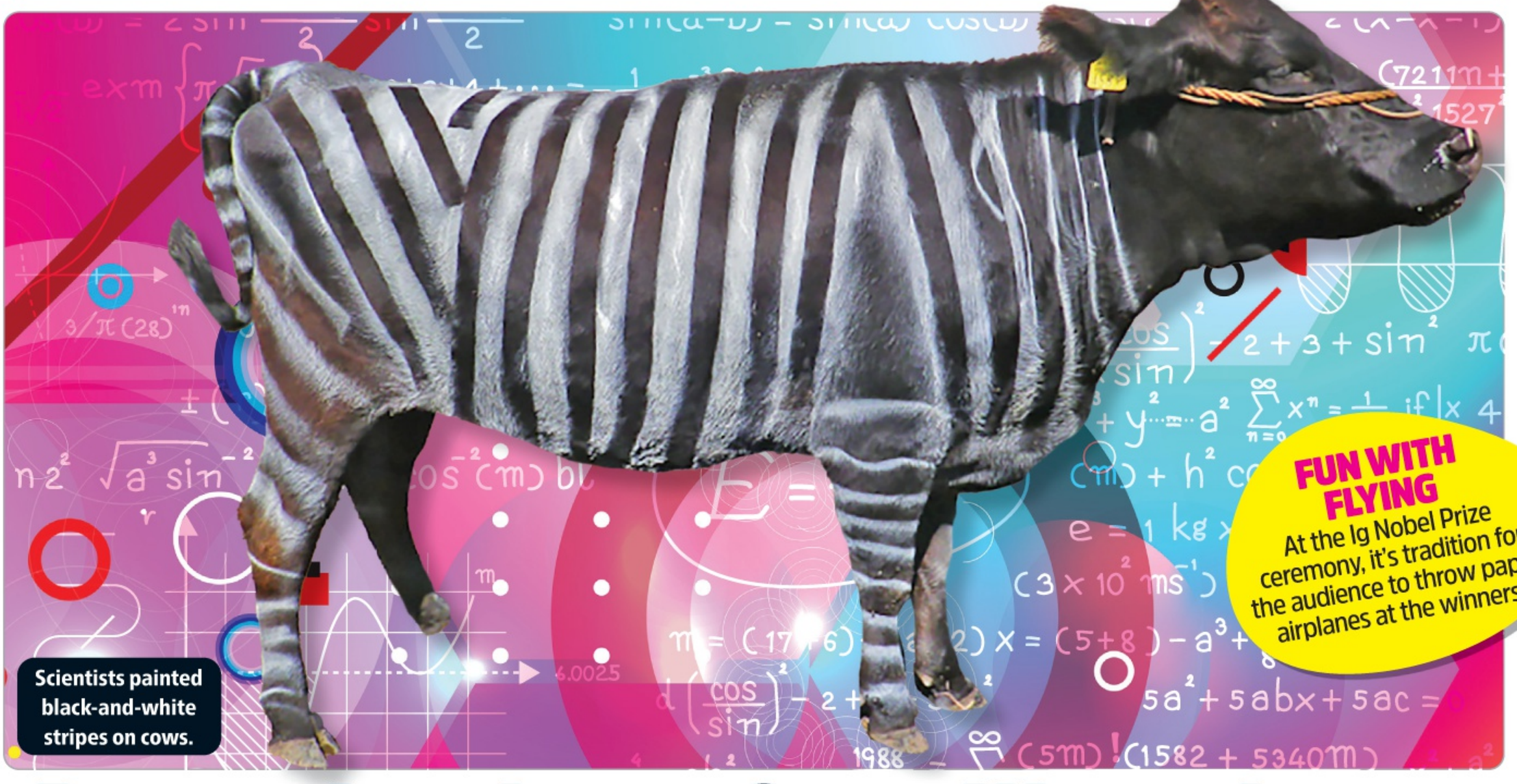
Growing in popularity

The art of napkin folding had become popular in Europe by the 17th century. In addition, the inventor of kindergarten, a German man named Friedrich Froebel who lived from 1782 to 1852, was a supporter of the craft of paper folding as an educational practice. During the 19th century, these practices were taken up in Japan and began to influence Japanese origami. Interest in origami reached new heights in the 20th century. In particular, a self-taught Japanese paper folder named Akira Yoshizawa is credited with inspiring greater interest in the craft in the 1950s. Called the grand master of modern origami, he invented the wet folding technique and published an influential book of origami designs in 1957.

Origami holiday decorations

A worldwide phenomenon

An origami enthusiast named Lillian Oppenheimer helped the art become more popular in the US. In 1958, she opened the Origami Center of America, which is now known as OrigamiUSA and located in the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Every year, OrigamiUSA puts up a holiday tree in the museum and decorates it with thousands of origami figures made by people around the world. Origami has also influenced science, inspiring designs from bridges to medical devices. Taking inspiration from origami, NASA (the US space agency) folded pieces of the James Webb Space Telescope so they'd fit inside the rocket that launched it into space. To learn how to make origami, visit OrigamiUSA.org.



Scientists painted black-and-white stripes on cows.

FUN WITH FLYING
At the Ig Nobel Prize ceremony, it's tradition for the audience to throw paper airplanes at the winners.

Awards given for silly science

The 2025 Ig Nobel Prizes were awarded in a ceremony at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The awards, inspired by the prestigious Nobel Prizes, are intended to spark people's interest in science by recognizing research that "makes people laugh, then think," according to prize officials (see box at right for more on the prizes).

Ten Ig Nobel winners—who are real scientists—are named each year in categories including biology, psychology, and engineering. The awards are presented by Nobel Prize winners (called laureates) at a festive ceremony with music, jokes, and costumes. This year, six Nobel laureates gave out the awards.

A four-cheese pizza

The 2025 Ig Nobel for Biology went to scientists who painted zebra stripes on cows. They wanted to see if the stripes made the animals less likely to be bitten by insects. Insects are a big problem for cows. The bites can hurt and make the cows eat less and produce less milk. Scientists had previously guessed that zebras' stripes help to stop insects from landing on their skin, and the study found that they were right. The cows that were painted with black-and-white stripes attracted fewer biting flies than those with no stripes.

The prize for Literature went to William B. Bean, who recorded and analyzed how fast his fingernails grew—for 35 years. When he started at age 32, his left thumbnail grew by 0.0048425197 inches each day. When he was 67 years old, his nails grew more slowly—by 0.00366141732 inches in a day. Later studies by others have shown that children's fingernails grow faster than adults' nails.

The Ig Nobel for Nutrition went to a team that discovered which pizza toppings are preferred by rainbow lizards. At a resort in Togo, West Africa, researchers noticed that the lizards often ate human-made food, so they watched closely and found that four-cheese pizza was their favorite.

The winners of the Engineering Design prize decided to tackle stinky shoes, caused by bacteria that make feet smelly. The team designed a shoe rack with an ultraviolet lamp in it. This light is invisible to human eyes but kills bacteria. Unfortunately, it also burned the shoes—but they were less stinky.

Two sets of Nobel Prizes

Andre Geim

The Ig Nobel Prizes might be funny, but they're named after the Nobel Prizes, which include some of the world's top science prizes and are given to people whose work offers the greatest benefit to mankind. "Ig Nobel" is a play on the word "ignoble," which means humble or lowly, and pokes fun at the Ig Nobels for not being as important as the real Nobels. While each Nobel Prize comes with an award of about $1.1 million, Ig Nobel winners receive a prize equal to about .4 cents.

But Ig Nobel winners are real scientists, and there's even one person who has won both. Andre Geim received the Nobel Prize in Physics in 2010 for his work with a material called graphene. He also won an Ig Nobel in 2000 for using magnets to make frogs levitate.

Dome-headed dino species discovered

Scientists discovered the oldest and most complete set of fossils of a dome-headed dinosaur called a pachycephalosaur. The specimen, which is between 108 million and 115 million years old, also represents a new species and could shed light on how these creatures developed.

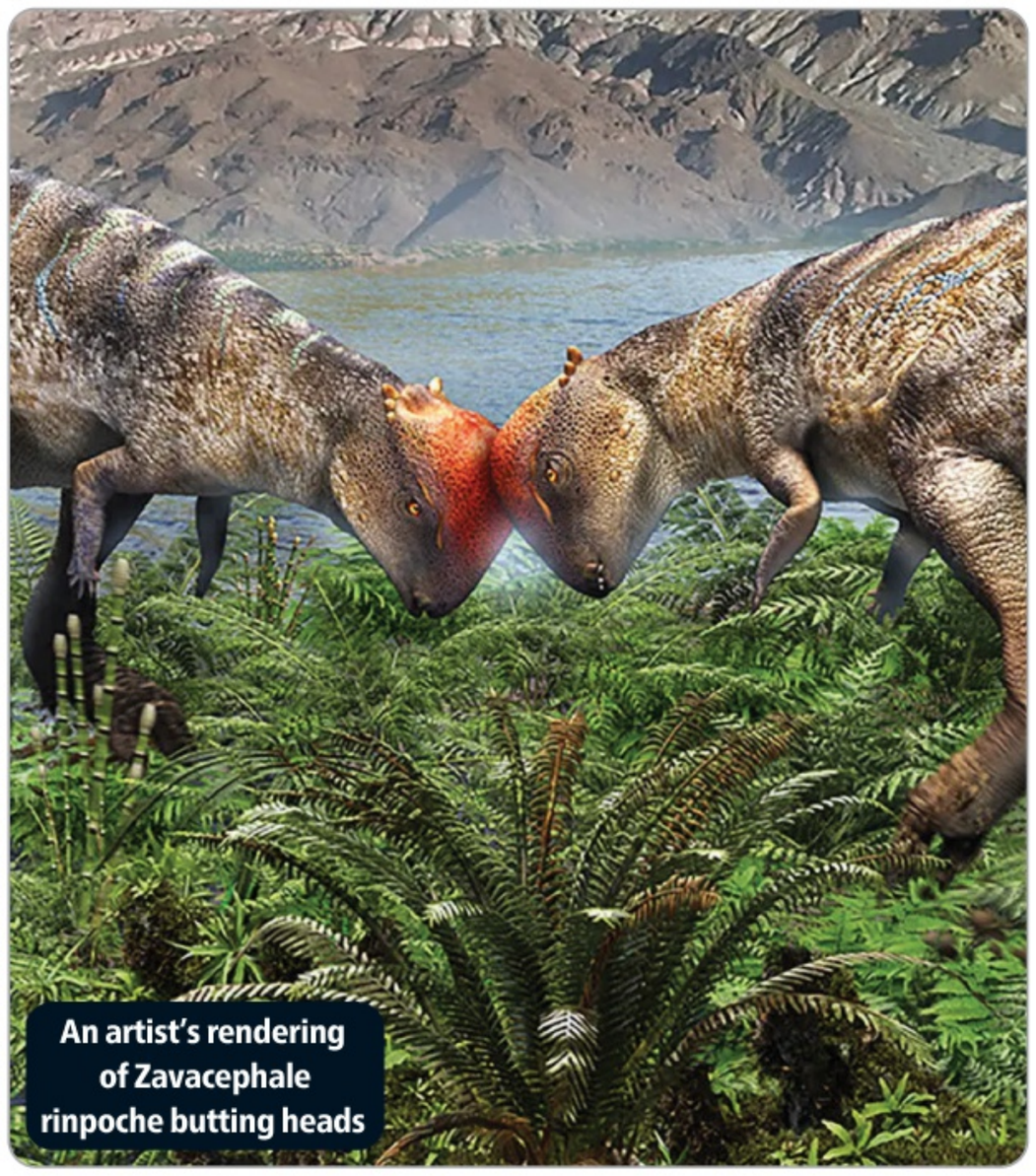
Pachycephalosaurs were plant-eating dinosaurs known for their thick domes, which they may have used for headbutting each other to compete for mates. Not much else is known about them because their fossilized remains usually included only their hard skulls.

The latest fossils, however, include a complete skull and parts of its hands, legs, and tail, as well as stomach stones that it swallowed to help grind its food. They were found in the Gobi Desert in Mongolia in 2019. Scientists at North Carolina State University analyzed the fossils and found that they belonged to a new species of pachycephalosaur they named Zavacephale rinpoche. It was about 15 million years older than the previous oldest-known pachycephalosaur fossils. At about 3 feet long, it was also smaller.

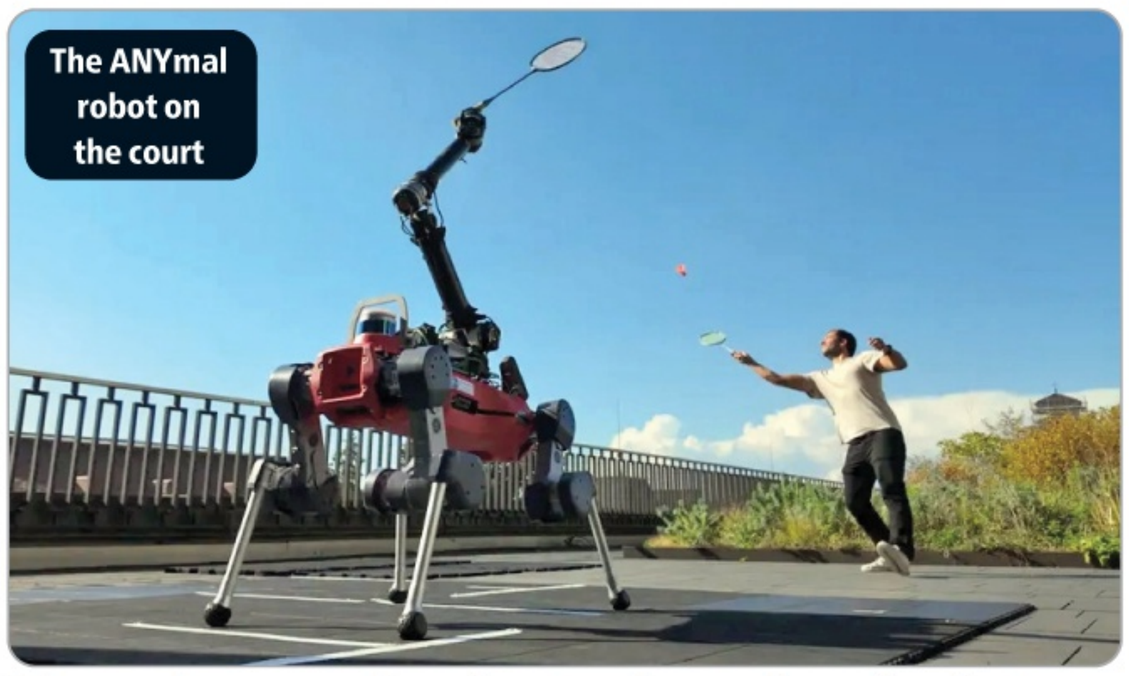
Based on an analysis of its leg bones, researchers believe it was a juvenile. Despite its young age, Zavacephale rinpoche had a fully grown skull dome. This suggested to scientists that the feature appeared early on in pachycephalosaur development. The creatures likely practiced headbutting before they became adults.

FITTING NAME

Pachycephalosaur means "thick-headed lizard," and the dinosaur's skull was about 20 times thicker than other dinosaur skulls.



An artist's rendering of Zavacephale rinpoche butting heads



The ANYmal robot on the court

Four-legged robot plays badminton

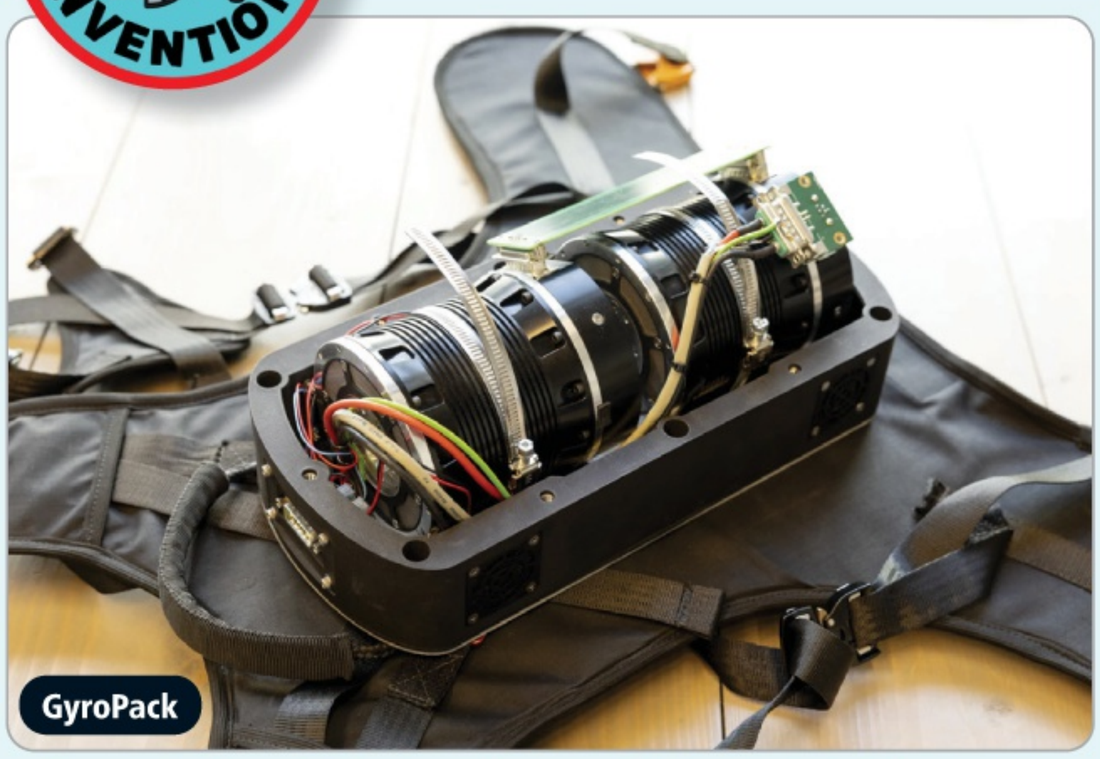
A new four-legged, one-armed robot used artificial intelligence (AI, when a computer imitates human learning) to learn to play badminton with a human opponent. ANYmal scuttles across the court and can trade up to 10 shots.

ANYmal is 1.5 feet tall, weighs 110 pounds, and has 18 joints that enable it to move with precision. Two cameras attached to its body provided visual information that helped it learn which direction the shuttlecock (object that players hit over a net) was heading in. Using trial and error, like a person, it figured out which direction to move in and how to position and swing its racket.

Although ANYmal showed that robots can perform complex actions, more work is needed to improve it. For example, it doesn't assess its opponents' movements like human players do. ANYmal's creators think it could one day be useful outside sports in disaster relief efforts.

AMAZING INVENTION

A backpack that improves balance



GyroPack

A new backpack is designed to help people who have difficulty walking or balancing and need a walker or cane to get around. GyroPack is a wearable device that contains gyroscopes, which are devices that detect when a moving object has changed direction.

When a GyroPack wearer moves, the gyroscopes are activated and generate an opposing force. This slows down the movements of the wearer's body and gives them time to regain their balance, stabilizes their gait, and helps prevent them from falling.

MASATO HATTORI; YUNTAO MA, ROBOTIC SYSTEMS LAB, ETH ZURICH; DELFT UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY; ON LEFT PAGE: TOMOKI KOJIMA/KAZATO OISHI/KATSUTOSHI KINO; AP; GETTY IMAGES

Photos of the week

Flock stars
As part of an autumn festival, sheep in Poland are herded down from hills.

Center stage
Students in India perform an ancient Hindu dance in traditional costumes.

Hanging on
In a breeding center in the UK, a European tree frog sits on a branch.

GETTY IMAGES (6)

Photos of the week

Popping up
Near Colombia, a humpback whale's fluke sticks out of the Pacific Ocean.

Under the sea
A blue jellyfish floats in the water off the coast of Turkey.

Honoring the past
In the US, a child with Native American heritage celebrates Indigenous Peoples' Day.

Aaron Nesmith (left) and Shai Gilgeous-Alexander

TRAVEL TEAMS
In January, the Memphis Grizzlies and Orlando Magic will play each other in Berlin, Germany, and London, England.

Brothers unite

Three siblings now play for the Milwaukee Bucks. The team has added Alex Antetokounmpo, who joins his brothers Giannis and Thanasis. The Golden State Warriors are expected to add Seth Curry (above right) to their roster, where he will join his brother, Steph (above left).

Thrilling start to NBA season

On October 21, the 2025–26 NBA (National Basketball Association) regular season tipped off. The Oklahoma City Thunder are the reigning champions and are expected to have a strong chance of defending their title. Some other top teams are expected to be the Cleveland Cavaliers, the Denver Nuggets, the New York Knicks, the Houston Rockets, and the Los Angeles Lakers.

On opening night, the Thunder faced the Rockets and came away with a 125–124 win in double overtime. Thunder star Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, who was the MVP (Most Valuable Player) in the 2024–25 regular season and NBA Finals, led the way with 35 points. In the other game that night, the Golden State Warriors beat the Lakers, 119–109. Warriors forward Jimmy Butler scored 31 points, while Steph Curry added 23 of his own. Lakers guard Luka Doncic had 43 points.

Victor Wembanyama

The next day, Dallas Mavericks rookie Cooper Flagg, the number one overall pick in the 2025 NBA Draft, made his career debut in a game against the San Antonio Spurs. Flagg came away with 10 points and 10 rebounds, while Spurs star Victor Wembanyama stole the show. He scored 40 points and tallied 15 rebounds in a 125–92 Spurs win.

Also on October 22, the Philadelphia 76ers beat the Boston Celtics, 117–116, after a big fourth-quarter comeback. The 76ers' VJ Edgecombe, this year's third overall draft pick, had 34 points, the third-highest total ever in an NBA debut. He scored 14 in the first quarter, breaking a rookie record set by LeBron James in 2003. The following day, the Thunder and the Indiana Pacers met in a rematch of last season's NBA Finals. Oklahoma City won, 141–135, in double overtime. Gilgeous-Alexander delivered 55 points and 12 rebounds.

Still, Wembanyama was the biggest star of the first week. On October 24, he had 29 points, 11 rebounds, and nine blocks in a 120–116 overtime win over the New Orleans Pelicans. Two days later, he scored 31 points to go along with 14 rebounds and six blocks in a 118–107 win over the Brooklyn Nets. He is the first NBA player ever to score 100 or more points and have 15 or more blocks in the first three regular-season games.

THIS WEEK'S WINNERS...

FIGURE SKATING

US skaters had strong performances at the Cup of China, a competition in the Grand Prix of Figure Skating. On October 25, Amber Glenn, last year's Grand Prix Final champion, placed first in the women's competition, while Alysa Liu, last season's world champion, placed second. The winners of the ice dance competition were US stars Madison Chock and Evan Bates, three-time world champions.

Alysa Liu (left) and Amber Glenn

CLUB SOCCER

On October 26, La Liga's Real Madrid and Barcelona faced off in a famous rivalry matchup known as El Clásico. Real Madrid won, 2–1, with goals by Kylian Mbappé and Jude Bellingham.

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

The New York Jets earned their first win this season on October 26, beating the Cincinnati Bengals, 39–38. The Jets began the fourth quarter down by 15 points. Their quarterback Justin Fields threw for 244 yards.

DID YOU KNOW?
Men's gymnastics has been part of the modern Olympics since they began in 1896, and the women's competition was added in 1928.

Left to right: Leanne Wong, Angelina Melnikova, and Zhang Qingying

Gymnasts compete at Worlds

From October 19 to October 25, top athletes from the US and other countries competed at the 2025 World Artistic Gymnastics Championships in Jakarta, Indonesia. Unlike most years, there was no team competition, so the focus was on the all-around titles and the individual apparatus events. The US men and women took home a total of five medals.

The US women's roster was made up of Leanne Wong and Joscelyn Roberson, who were alternates at last year's Olympics, as well as Skye Blakely and Dulcy Caylor. The US men's roster included 2024 Olympians Asher Hong and Brody Malone, along with Kameron Nelson, Patrick Hoopes, Brandon Dang, and Donnell Whittenburg.

The women's all-around combines four events: vault, uneven bars, balance beam, and floor exercise. All four US gymnasts made the finals. The gold went to Angelina Melnikova, a four-time Olympic medalist from Russia. She finished ahead of silver medalist Wong by 0.1 point. China's Zhang Qingying took the bronze. In the individual events, Roberson won bronze in the vault. Melnikova won gold in that event too.

The men's all-around has six events: floor, pommel horse, still rings, vault, parallel bars, and horizontal bar. Japan's Daiki Hashimoto won the all-around gold, his third consecutive world title. He also won silver in the horizontal bar event. As for the US men, Whittenburg earned gold on the still rings, a first for an American at Worlds. It was also his first medal in 10 years. Hoopes took home the bronze in the pommel horse, and Malone won his second horizontal bar World title.

COACH OF THE WEEK

Coach's Name: **Charles Lawrence**

Team: **San Diego Legends FC Gold Team 2013 (soccer)**

"Coach Charles is a very experienced, dedicated, and sympathetic coach. He played on the Jamaican National Team, so he knows how the game works. Some of the things he teaches us about include technique, speed, fitness, and most of all, how to work as a team. He also teaches us life lessons, like if you give up, you'll get nowhere, and to tune out negative comments. He helped me become a better defender and a better person." Nirvi, 12, California

To nominate a Coach of the Week, send your coach's name, photo, sport, and team to *hello@theweekjunior.com*. Include your name, age, state, and a few reasons why your coach is great.

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Zoë Bormet

AGE: 22 SPORT: FIELD HOCKEY
TEAM: UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Major move Field hockey is growing in popularity in the US but isn't big everywhere. When I was young, I lived in Illinois and did soccer and dance. When we moved to Michigan when I was in second grade, I was introduced to field hockey. My mom signed me up because I needed to make friends. I really, really liked it. My goal became playing at the University of Michigan. I've won two Big Ten championships here.

Tricky fun The challenge and creativity of the sport hooked me. Unlike ice hockey, you can only use one side of the stick, so it's very complex. Also, there are an infinite number of skills and tactics you can learn and really create your own style of play.

Tough time My freshman year, I took a "red shirt" year, practicing and training with the team but not competing. I made great strides but had a hard time not being on the field. I felt a bit lost, and I wondered why I was doing it, but I stuck with it and realized I'd be at a loss without field hockey in my life. I'm proud of how I found a deep love for it again.

Keeping calm I try to stay chill for about two hours before a game. You don't want to hit your adrenaline peak too early and crash in the game.

Off-field focus I'm involved with Team Impact, a nonprofit that matches chronically ill or disabled children with NCAA sports teams. Our team was matched with a girl named Charlotte, who is 11 and has Down syndrome. This is her second season with us, and she's an amazing addition to our team. She brings us light, meaning, and purpose.

GETTY IMAGES; MICHIGAN ATHLETICS (2); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (5)

MINI MANSION
Queen Mary's Dolls' House, which is on display at Windsor Castle in the UK, is considered the largest dollhouse in the world.

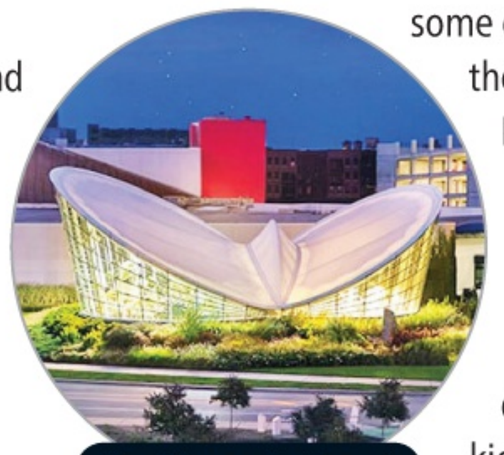
A scene from *Dollhouses Unveiled*

Dollhouses on display in exhibit

The Strong National Museum of Play is highlighting the history of small-scale homes and why people of all ages love them.

Small homes are at the center of a big exhibit at the Strong National Museum of Play in Rochester, New York. *Dollhouses Unveiled* focuses on the history, creation, and purposes of dollhouses, and it showcases dozens of houses and miniatures dating from the 1830s to the present.

The museum was founded by Margaret Woodbury Strong, a longtime collector of small objects, and opened in 1982. She had more than 27,000 dolls as well as toys, dollhouses, and miniatures, and many of her pieces are part of the exhibit.



The Strong National Museum of Play

"We wanted to provide guests with a rare opportunity to see these special artifacts, some of which have been unseen in the museum's vaults for decades," Michelle Parnett-Dwyer, the show's curator (person who chooses art), told *The Week Junior*.

Although some of the houses on display were made to be toys, dollhouses weren't always for kids. "They were once playthings for adults, originally showcasing finely made furnishings of exotic materials," Parnett-Dwyer said. "They served as symbols of wealth."

The houses on display include an elaborate mansion from the 1890s and a replica of a famous home in Kennebunk, Maine, known as the Wedding Cake House. There is also a Barbie Dreamhouse from 1979 that Parnett-Dwyer said visitors may be surprised to discover is not pink but harvest gold.

One thing she hopes people learn from the exhibit, she said, is that anyone can play with dollhouses and miniatures. Their appeal is simple, she added: "Ordinary, everyday objects seem extraordinary in miniature."

More places to see minis

The National Museum of Toys/Miniatures

There are more than 100,000 objects in this Kansas City, Missouri, museum's collection. The items include miniature rooms and little paintings, food, and musical instruments.

Carnegie Museum of Art

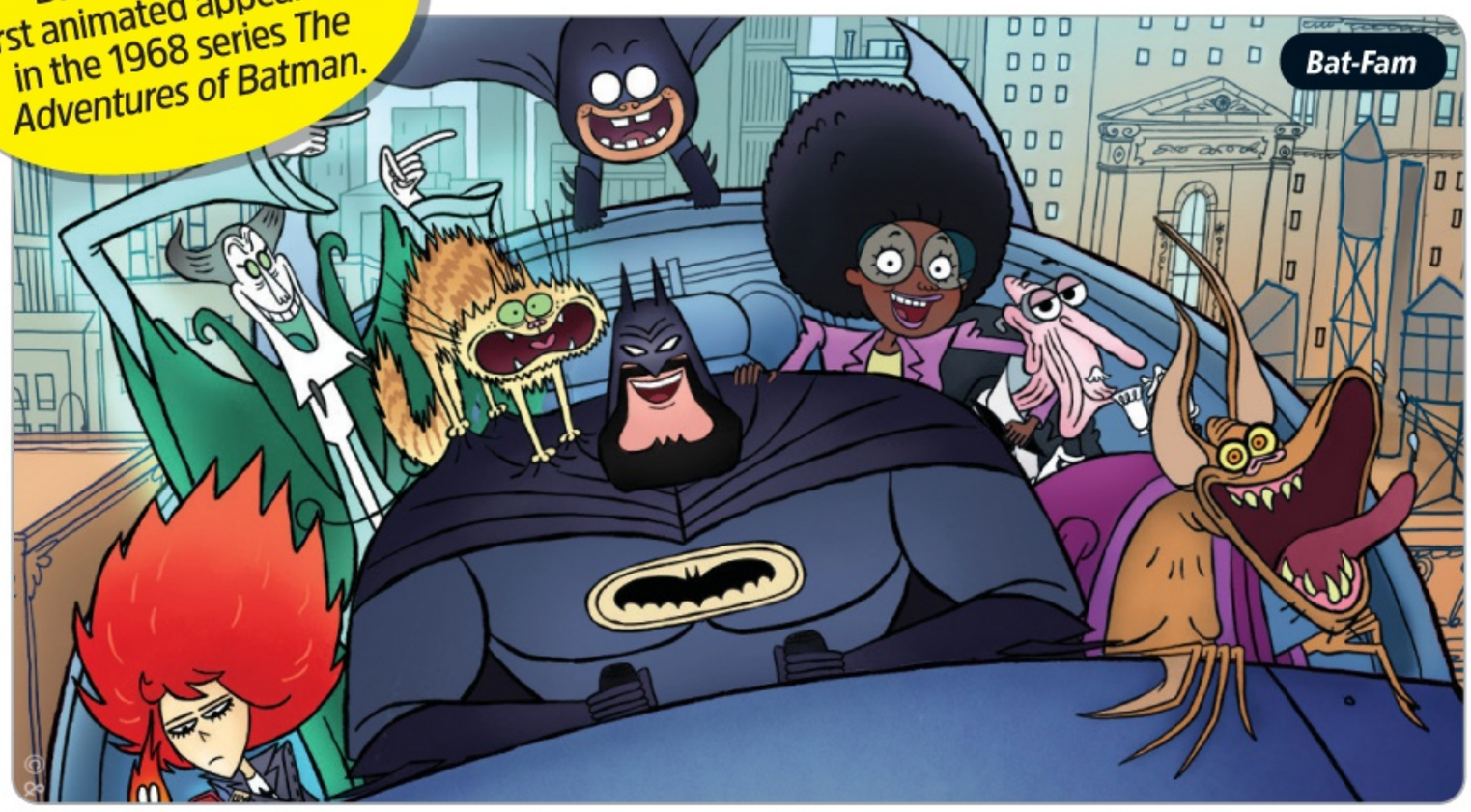
This Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, museum has a Gallery of Miniatures, which features 11 tiny rooms, including the one below. There are reproductions of rooms that were in real homes, as well as rooms the museum created with mini antique furnishings.

The Great American Dollhouse Museum

At this destination in Danville, Kentucky, miniature displays create stories about different time periods and neighborhoods. Scenes are filled with mini people, too.

COURTESY THE STRONG NATIONAL MUSEUM OF PLAY (2); COURTESY THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF TOYS AND MINIATURES, KANSAS CITY, MO; BRIAN CONLEY/CARNEGIE MUSEUM OF ART; KIRK SCHLEA

BIG DEBUT
Batman made his first animated appearance in the 1968 series *The Adventures of Batman*.



New show about Batman's family

A beloved DC superhero is starring in a new animated TV series that shows a different side of his life. *Bat-Fam* follows Bruce Wayne (Batman's public identity) and his son, Damian "Little Batman" Wayne, as they juggle crime-fighting and family chaos. The show begins streaming on Prime Video and Amazon Kids+ on November 10.

Bat-Fam is a sequel to *Merry Little Batman*, a 2023 film that featured Damian (voiced by *Elio* star Yonas Kibreab, now age 15) defending Gotham City from the villain the Joker on Christmas Eve. The series begins after that, with Damian living at Wayne Manor with his dad as well as Alfred, the family's loyal butler; teen Claire, a reformed supervillain; Alfred's adventurous grandniece, Alicia Pennyworth, who helps run an organization called E*Vil; and Ra's al Ghul, Damian's slightly evil but warm grandfather. Kibreab, a longtime Batman fan, told *The Week Junior* his character is "a bit of a troublemaker who likes to play pranks and go off on side adventures."

Yonas Kibreab

There have been many Batman movies, shows, and comics, but *Bat-Fam* is special because it was made for kids and shows the world of superheroes in an unusual way.

"You never really see what their lives are like when their masks are off," Kibreab said. "Getting to see the superheroes and supervillains that way is a really cool thing."

Accepting that supervillains can change is hard for Damian, so one of the major themes of the series is trust. Kibreab said it also has a big message about the importance of family and never taking them for granted. "Always love them," he said, "and know they're going to be there for you when you need them."

READER RECOMMENDS

Wicked *PG (Available to stream or rent on major platforms)*

"This movie musical tells the story of what happened before the events in the movie *The Wizard of Oz*. (Watch that movie, too!) *Wicked* follows two girls, Elphaba and Glinda, who don't get along at first but end up being friends. Glinda wants to be popular and cares a lot about what others think of her. Elphaba, on the other hand, stands up for animals and what she believes is right. This is only part one of the story. Part two, *Wicked: For Good*, comes out on November 21. I think in that movie some of the characters will turn into the Scarecrow and the Tin Man from *The Wizard of Oz*." Ariel, 9, New York

Do you have a film or TV show to recommend to other kids? Send your review to *hello@theweekjunior.com*.

THIS WEEK'S WATCH LIST

Twisted Wonderland: The Animation
(Disney+)

This series based on a Japanese mobile game follows a teen who is mysteriously transported to a magical world. He lands at a school inspired by classic Disney villains. Monsters, rivalries, and secrets stand in his way of getting home.

Expedition Unknown
(Discovery+) (Discovery Channel)
November 5 at 9 p.m. ET

Explorer Josh Gates looks for lost treasures and takes on fun investigations in this adventure-filled history series. The new season includes a peek inside Egypt's Great Pyramid and a quest inspired by the movie *The Goonies*.

Charlotte's Web
(HBO Max)

The classic novel by E.B. White comes to life in this new three-part animated adaptation. Wilbur, a gentle pig, befriends Charlotte, a clever spider who weaves words in her web to save him from danger. The voice cast features Amy Adams (*Enchanted*) as Charlotte.

DC/WARNER BROS. ANIMATION; GETTY IMAGES; UNIVERSAL PICTURES; DISNEY; WARNER BROS. DISCOVERY, INC.; COURTESY OF HBO MAX

CREATIVE CENTER
The Martha Graham School, located in New York City, was founded in 1926 and is the oldest professional school of dance in the US.

Just Dance 2026 Edition

Have fun in dance challenges

Just Dance 2026 Edition is the latest version of a popular competitive dancing game. It was recently released for the Nintendo Switch, Xbox systems, and PlayStation platforms.

The Just Dance franchise was launched in 2009, and a new edition comes out each year. The 2026 version has 40 new songs, and they are paired with choreography that gamers can learn and perfect. The new music includes the pop hits "APT" by Rosé and Bruno Mars and "Good Luck, Babe!" by Chappell Roan. It also features classic songs such as "Girls Just Want to Have Fun" by Cyndi Lauper. Fans of the animated series *Bluey* can dance to a "Bluey Medley," which features the characters Bluey and Bingo and video clips from the show.

Bluey

To begin the competition, every player connects to the console with a smartphone that has the Just Dance Controller mobile app. Then you hold your phone in your hand and follow the moves displayed on your TV. You earn points by matching them. Up to six players can dance at once.

There are several different modes in the game. A new one is Party Mode, which turns every round into a fast-paced medley. The game mashes up songs, shows wacky graphics that make it hard to see the choreography, and has fun rules like Simon Says.

Another new feature is the Camera Controller mode, which can be used only by solo players. In that mode, your phone's camera tracks your moves, allowing you to move both hands freely and really let loose.

PODCAST OF THE WEEK

TERRESTRIALS
Major podcast platforms

This family-friendly podcast is part musical and part science storytelling. It explores weird and surprising stories from nature through insights from experts as well as original songs and sound effects. Recent episodes have covered the science behind pizza and beavers that fight wildfires.

APP OF THE WEEK

UNO WONDER
Apple App Store, Google Play

This recently released online version of the popular card game has several fun, fresh twists. It features a deck with nine new cards that include Wild Skip All, which can be used to have all your opponents lose a turn; Number Tornado, which clears all number cards from play; and Parrot, which lets you see the colors of the other players' cards.

WEBSITE OF THE WEEK

WHAT THE ART?
tinyurl.com/TWJUS-WhatArt

By playing this Google Arts & Culture game, you can learn about art and test your drawing or guessing skills. As a solo player, you see a sketch of a piece of art or an artifact on the screen, then try to identify it from a set of cards. When you compete with friends, you can take turns sketching.

UBISOFT (2); WNYC STUDIOS; MATTEL; GOOGLE ARTS & CULTURE

BOOK CLUB PICK FOR NOVEMBER

Dragonborn

By Struan Murray
(Penguin Random House)

Two years ago, Alex's dad died, and she has been struggling ever since. She used to love playing in the woods with her dad, but now her mom won't let her. One day, the loss becomes overwhelming, and she wants to scream. Instead, she spits fire! Oliphos, a dragon who looks like a human, appears and brings her to an island where she can be around other kids who share her dragon heritage. But Alex has trouble fitting in, and she's upset that she can't fully transform into a dragon like some of the other children can. One of the dragons, Ferox, destroys Alex's mementos from her father while they are sparring. Alex crosses paths with an evildoer who is trying to locate a device to destroy mankind. Alex becomes determined to keep the object out of his clutches and summon its power to find her father's spirit. Will she succeed? This story is full of action and betrayals, and it explores what it feels like to be an outsider. You will cheer on Alex as she becomes braver by the chapter. *Ages 8–12*

WIN A BOOK!

We're giving away one signed copy of *Dragonborn*.

For a chance to win, send your name and address to *contests@theweekjunior.com* with Dragonborn in the subject line. Enter by midnight on November 21. See theweekjunior.com/terms for complete rules.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR YOUR BOOK CLUB

Dragonborn, the first book in a riveting new fantasy series, transports you to a magical realm. Here are questions to get a conversation going with friends and family who have also read the book.

Why do you think Alex has such a hard time transforming into a dragon?

How does Alex's relationship with her mom change?

What twist in the book surprised you the most?

Do you think Ferox had good or bad intentions when he destroyed the items from Alex's father? Explain your answer.

What do you think are Alex's best and worst characteristics?

Alex gets to pick her own dragon name. What name would you choose?

JOIN *THE WEEK JUNIOR* BOOK CLUB

Find out more about *The Week Junior* Book Club and check out our previous book of the month selections at kids.theweekjunior.com/bookclub.

Ask the Author

The Week Junior spoke to Struan Murray, author of *Dragonborn* and other children's novels. When he isn't writing books, he teaches biochemistry at Oxford University in England.

How did you come up with the idea for *Dragonborn*?

About five years ago, I was standing in line for ice cream when I met a dragon scholar. After chatting with him, I got the idea for a book set in a world where dragons are real but are hidden among us. Some of them may have been hidden so long that they even forgot they're dragons!

How do you balance your creative and scientific sides?

Science and art aren't as different as people may think. In science, you have a complex problem that you're trying to explain to other people. When writing a novel, you have a complex idea in your head that you're trying to express in a way that other people will enjoy reading.

What childhood books influenced you the most?

I read a lot of comics like *Calvin and Hobbes* and *The Adventures of Tintin*. When I was about 10 years old, my mom introduced me to *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings,* and I grew to love those books.

What's your best writing advice?

Remember that your writing doesn't have to be good right away. For your first draft, think of it as if you're just putting clay down on the table. With the next draft, you're going to shape the clay.

Favorite food?

A big stack of pancakes dripping with butter and maple syrup. The last time I visited the US, I went to a diner to order them!

BOOK: COURTESY OF PUBLISHER; AUTHOR: COURTESY OF STRUAN MURRAY; GETTY IMAGES

AMAZING MISSION
One Warm Coat has helped distribute more than 8 million coats in the US since 1992.

Organize a clothes drive

You can support others by collecting and donating clothing.

With colder weather coming, it's important that everyone has the items they need to stay warm, from long-sleeve shirts to coats and gloves. You can help by organizing a clothes drive. This is an event where people drop off clothes they have outgrown or no longer wear so they can be distributed to people who need them. Here's how you can get started.

Pick a donation spot

Begin with a large cardboard box. You will want to select a spot for your donation box that many people will see and that is easy for them to access. You can ask a school, place of worship, community center, or local library if it can keep the donation container for your drive.

Set a timeline

Once you have a place to collect clothing, coordinate with their staff about the dates and hours people can drop off donations. You will want to give donors enough time, so consider a period of two to three weeks.

Spread the word

You can print out or draw flyers with details about what you're collecting. For example, you can let people know if you're accepting clothing donations in good condition for both adults and children or if you are collecting a specific item, like coats. Also be sure to include an address where people can find the donation box. With an adult, ask local businesses if you can display your flyer in their window. You can also ask family members to tell their friends and post about your drive on social media.

Identify gently used clothes.

Deliver the donations

Once you have the clothing donations, you'll want to bring them to an organization that can distribute them to where they are needed. (Some organizations also offer the option to pick up your donations at a scheduled time.) Sites to check out include clothingdonations.org and onewarmcoat.org.

Express gratitude

Be sure you take photos of your donations to document the community's contributions. You can write thank-you notes to any volunteers who helped. With an adult's assistance, post on social media about the success of the drive—your kind deed may encourage someone else to start one! For more ideas for helping others, see some examples in the column at right.

More ways to help

There are many types of items you can donate. Here are a few.

Toys and games With help from an adult, you can check for toy collection initiatives at children's hospitals, fire and police stations, and after-school programs.

Old books Many public libraries will accept book donations, and teachers are often seeking more books to help fill their classroom shelves.

Pet supplies Animal shelters often need old sheets and blankets to help keep animals comfortable. You can also look online to see if your local shelter has posted a wish list.

FRUIT FARMERS
Washington state produces more than 60% of the nation's apple crop.

WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the microwave.

Make tasty cinnamon apple cider fudge

Ingredients

- Two 12-ounce bags white chocolate chips
- 4 tablespoons butter
- One 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon, plus more for topping
- ⅓ cup apple butter

Instructions

1. Line an 8-inch square baking pan with parchment paper, leaving an overhang on two sides. Spray the parchment with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In a large, microwave-safe bowl, microwave the white chocolate chips, butter, and condensed milk in 30-second intervals, stirring after each, until melted and smooth. Mix in the cinnamon.
3. Spread mixture in the prepared pan. Use a teaspoon to dollop the apple butter across the top of the fudge. Using the tip of a butter knife, draw figure eights in the fudge to create apple butter swirls.
4. Dust lightly with more cinnamon, then refrigerate fudge until firm, at least 1 hour. Makes 16 servings.

ERICA CLARK FOR STONE KITCHEN CREATIVE; GETTY IMAGES; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES

ECO TIP OF THE WEEK: DON'T RAKE YOUR FALLEN LEAVES

Autumn brings a burst of fall foliage—and leaves on the ground. Before you and your family grab rakes to clean them up, consider leaving your leaves where they are. As the weather gets colder, a thick layer of leaves provides a habitat for small wildlife, including wood frogs, salamanders, moths, and bumblebee queens. Leaves are a destination for non-migrating birds looking for nesting materials or bugs to munch on below. Dead leaves also provide nutrients to soil and make great mulch later for spring flowers. Plus, nearly one third of discarded leaves end up in landfills to rot. Talk to your family about where they might be willing to leave some leaves alone.

Puzzles

Word search

Can you find all these words associated with a rainforest? They are hidden horizontally, vertically, or diagonally and can be forward or backward. When you're done, read the remaining letters to get a bonus message.

BATS
CANOPY
CHIMPANZEE
DENSE
FERN
FROG
HOWLER MONKEY
HUMID
INSECTS
JAGUAR
LEMUR
LIZARD
LUSH
MACAW
ORCHID
PIRANHA
RAIN
SLOTH
SNAKE
TARANTULA
TOUCAN
TREE
TROPICAL
VINES

T G H
H E O P A L F M
A W R I N S E C T S
E L O F R Z O R M N H B
E A R T A R A N T U L A
S R R S C M N I R T
L M L T N H L H I S
O O T R O P I C A L
E N A C U O T D A N S
S K S O F J I N H S R
E E Z N A P M I H C
Y N E L G E K A N S
C T P I H U M I D R A Z I L
O V A S S P E
C N R I H
M A C A W
C E S

OFF SIDES

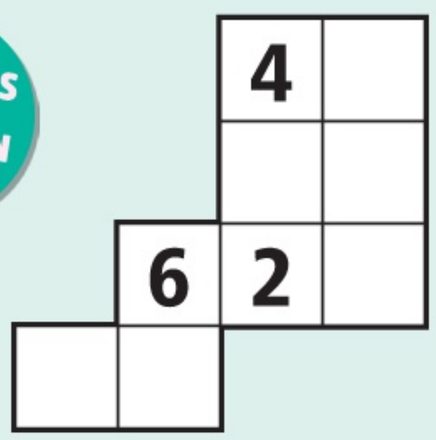
Make three different five-letter words by using the letters given to fill in the blanks. (NEED A HINT? Check the bottom of the page.)

B G H S V Z

_ E I N _
_ E I N _
_ E I N _

Out of order

The numbers 1 to 9 can fit, one per square, so that no two consecutive numbers are in squares that touch in any way, even at a corner. Use the numbers already given to figure out where the rest of the numbers go.



ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 29.

FILL IN THE BLANKS

Fill in the blanks in each sentence with two words so the second word is the same as the first word with the first two letters removed, like HONEST and NEST.

1. Using her loudest _ _ _ _ _, the lady shouted to the boys that the _ _ _ was too thin to skate on.
2. Some of the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ stamps in my grandfather's collection show stars he saw in the movies or on the Broadway _ _ _ _ _.
3. The highway patrolman said we'd have to take a detour around the area rather than drive _ _ _ _ _ _ _ it because the road was unpaved and _ _ _ _ _.

Spot the difference

These two pictures of an origami fox appear to be the same, but take a closer look. There are actually five differences. Can you see them?

PUZZLES BY PUZZABILITY

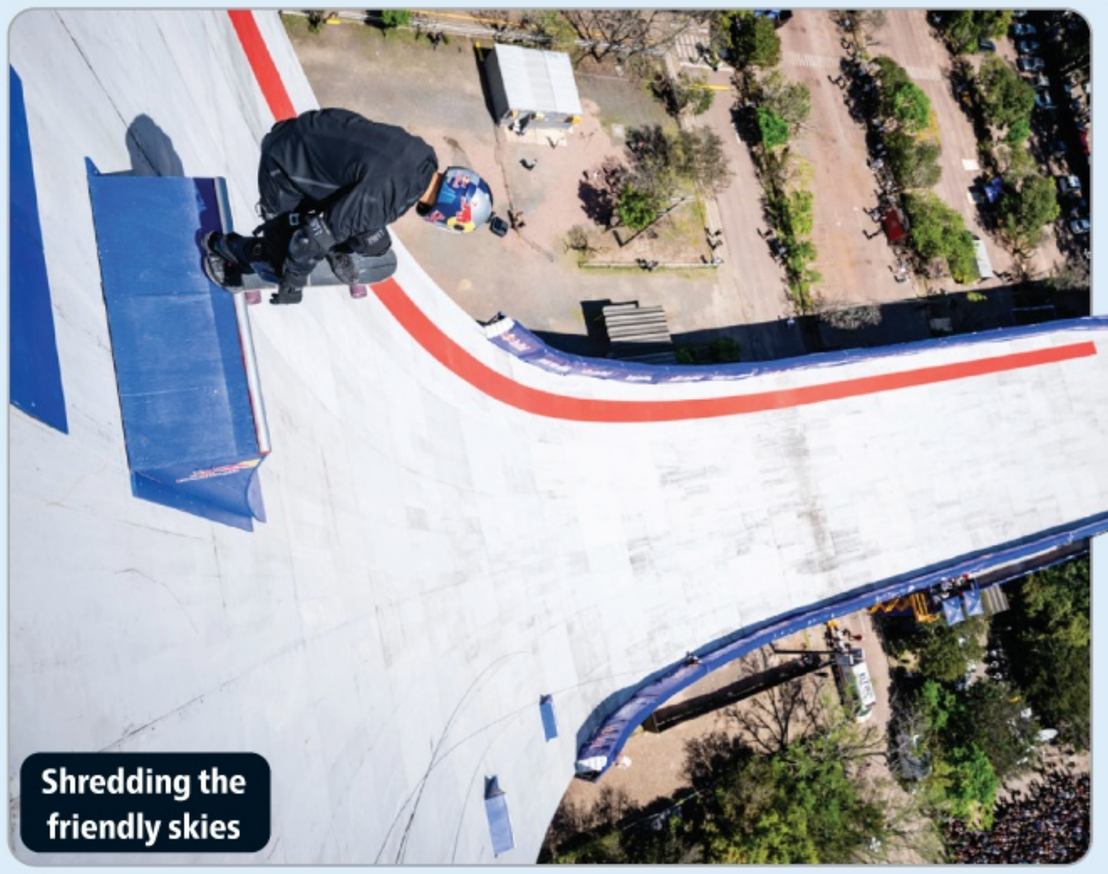
Off sides hint: One of the answers is a famous brand name.

That's unbelievable!

Duke with some loot

Duke the thieving retriever

Duke, an 11-year-old golden retriever, is cozying up to his new owners—and their dishware. When Cathy Hoyt and her husband adopted Duke 18 months ago, they were warned that he had a habit of stealing household items to snuggle with. Still, Hoyt was surprised by the variety of items the dog took, including books, teacups, a roll of toilet paper, and a lamp. She started an Instagram account to keep up with Duke's capers. "It's just crazy," said Hoyt. "He will have a room full of toys and find a teapot."



Shredding the friendly skies

The world's largest skate ramp

Skateboarding reached new heights at the Red Bull Building Drop event, where Brazilian skateboarder Sandro Dias made a jaw-dropping descent down a 197-foot ramp. The curved side of a building received a makeover to become the "ultimate skate ramp" for Dias' drop. As the athlete skated down, he reached speeds of 64 miles per hour—as fast as a car on the highway—and broke two world records. "I knew it was possible," he said. "No matter how far away your dreams may seem, never give up on them!"

It was good, clean fun.

A sea voyage in a bathtub

YouTuber Max Fosh took on an unusual challenge when he traveled from Cornwall, England, to the Isles of Scilly in a bathtub. Inspired by a drawing he made at age 6, "of me in a bathtub sailing the seas," he said he wanted to make "little Max's dreams come true." In just under nine hours, he journeyed 28 miles with a safety crew following him. On arrival, Fosh celebrated with islanders and gifted his vessel, "Billy the Bathtub Boat," to a delighted 10-year-old. He now plans to make a film about his trip.

Fresh food that stares at you

A supermarket in Aberdeen, Scotland, has come up with a plan to draw people's attention to fruit and vegetables. Every morning before the shop opens, staff are given the task of decorating fresh produce with googly eyes. The tactic is proving successful—a video of staff putting googly eyes on butternut squashes has gained 1.7 million views on social media, and people are flocking to the store to buy fruits and veggies with eyes. Is this story true, or do you spy a lie?*

*Fake! A family of customers, not employees, placed googly eyes on products at the store. A video of their antics did rack up 1.7 million views. The mom of the family, Laura Coe, said she enjoyed seeing shoppers "giggling away."

GETTY IMAGES (2); CATHY HOYT; GEORGE HEMING; RED BULL CONTENT; SHUTTERSTOCK; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (3)

Your turn

Editor's note

Election Day is coming up in the US on Tuesday, November 4 (p4). A President will not be elected this year—the next contest for that office will take place in 2028. And next year, in 2026, the country will hold a midterm election, when seats for every member of the House of Representatives and about one third of the Senate will be on the ballot, along with many other offices at the state and local level. This year, fewer races are being decided but the election is still significant. As you read this issue, candidates for the office of governor in New Jersey and Virginia, mayor of several big cities including New York, and hundreds of other positions throughout the US are making their final pitch to voters. You may hear campaign ads and see lawn signs in neighborhoods near you. Our team will be paying close attention to what happens and will cover the results in Issue 292.

Andrea Barbalich
Editorial Director

Inspiring imagination in kids

Kyle, 12, and Karter, 10, Georgia

"My younger brother Karter once told me a bedtime story that started with, 'Can you imagine a fish that flies?' I thought he meant a flying fish, but he meant a fish that was a pilot. That was the start of our book. Our mom found an artist who helped bring our story to life. Then we got our book, *How Do You Imagine the Whole Wild World?,* published. Since then, we've had amazing chances to work with kids and encourage them to use their imagination—a true superpower! We've done an interview, a book festival and signing, and more. We hope you let your imagination run wild too!"

Have you done something interesting or raised money for a cause you care about? Whatever you're up to, we want to hear about it at *hello@theweekjunior.com.*

RIDDLE OF THE WEEK

What's bought by the yard but worn by the foot?

Carpet

CHARITY OF THE WEEK

Feeding America

About 47 million people, including 13 million children, experience hunger in the US every year. Feeding America has many programs to get healthy food to people in need, including some that specifically help children. The organization works with food pantries, schools, and after-school programs to ensure that kids get enough to eat, and it has distributed more than 5.7 billion meals.

Find out more at feedingamerica.org.

ANNUAL COMPETITION

Enter our Winter Cover Contest!

If you would like to see your artwork on the cover of *The Week Junior*, here is your chance! We are accepting entries to our 2025 Winter Cover Contest. At right is the winning cover from our 2024 competition. The drawing form and consent form needed to enter can be found at kids.theweekjunior.com/activities. Entries will be judged on creativity, originality, and how well they reflect the winter theme and *The Week Junior*. Be sure your artwork is in color! When you're finished, have a parent fill out the consent form and email it with a digital image of your artwork to *covercontest@theweekjunior.com*. The deadline to apply is November 12!

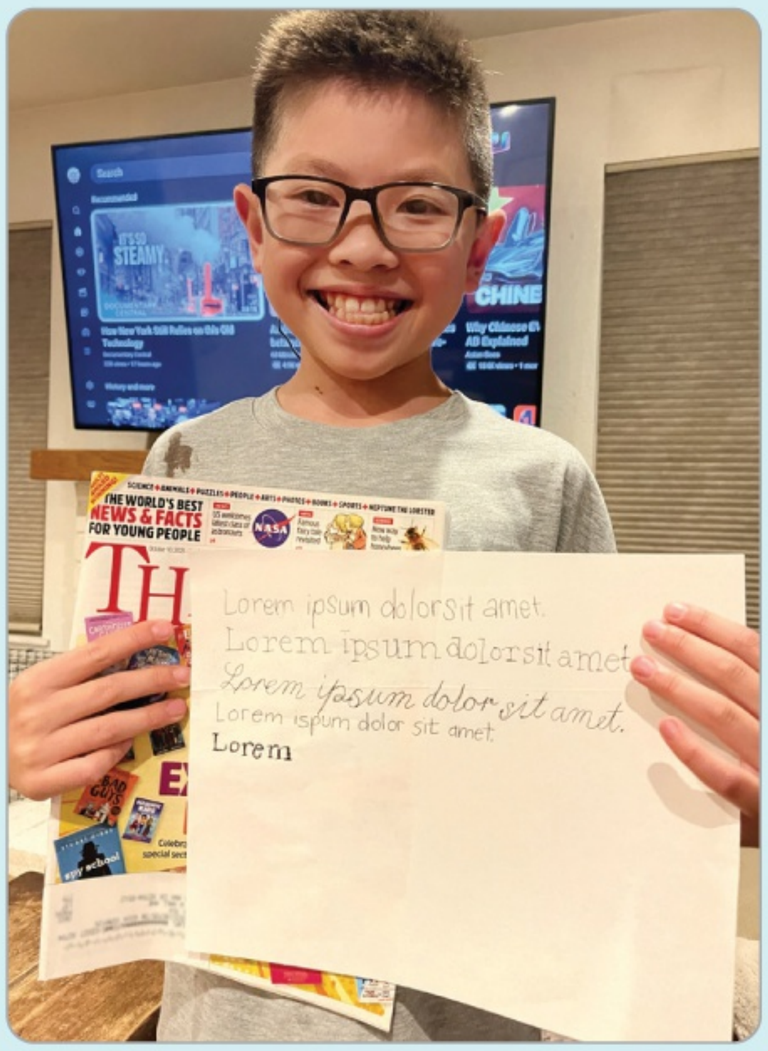
Your turn

YOUR PHOTOS

We'd love to see pictures you've taken or pictures with you in them! Have an adult email them to us at *hello@theweekjunior.com*, along with anything you would like us to know about what's happening in the photo.

"I love Roald Dahl! One of my favorite books is *The Twits*, so I'm excited for the Netflix show!" Lois, 10, Georgia

"*The Week Junior* inspired me to improve my handwriting. I started practicing a lot!" Miles, 10, California


THE WORLD'S BEST NEWS & FACTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
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Lorem

"The sandwiches from How To turned out delicious. The broccoli was a nice touch!" Olsen, 9, and Nora, 11, Tennessee

Statement of ownership

1. Statement required by 39 U.S.C. 3685 showing the ownership, management, and circulation of The Week Junior. 2. Publication No.23550. 3. Date of filing: October 2025. 4. Issue frequency: weekly with double issues in April, July, September, and December. 5. Number of issues published annually: 48 issues. 6. Annual subscription price $149 7. Contact person: Leslie Guarnieri, (877) 245-8151. Location of known office of publication: 130 West 42nd Street, 7th Floor, NY, NY 10036. 8. Location of headquarters or general business offices of the publisher is the same as above. 9. The names and addresses of publisher, editor-in-chief, and managing editors are: Publisher: Stevie Lee, 130 West 42nd Street, 7th Floor, NY, NY 10036. Editor-in-Chief: Andrea Barbalich, 130 West 42nd Street, 7th Floor, NY, NY 10036. 10. The owner is: Future US INC (Future PLC), 130 West 42nd Street, 7th Floor, NY, NY 10036. 11. Future US INC (Future PLC) 12. For tax purposes, the purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization have not changed during the preceding 12 months. 13. Publication title: The Week Junior magazine. 14. Issue for circulation data below: 09/26/25. 15. Extent and nature of circulation. 17. Statement of Ownership will be printed in the November 7 issue of this publication. 18. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.
(Signed) Leslie Guarnieri, Circulation Director

	Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months	Single issue nearest to filing date
A. Total No. Copies Printed	137,411	142,411
B. Paid and/or Requested Circulation		
1. Paid/Requested Outside-County mail subscriptions stated on Form 3541	137,055	142,260
2. Paid In-County subscriptions stated on Form 3541	0	0
3. Sales through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution	0	0
4. Other Classes mailed through the USPS	0	0
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E. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution	422	223
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G. Copies Not Distributed	0	0
H. Total	137,411	142,411
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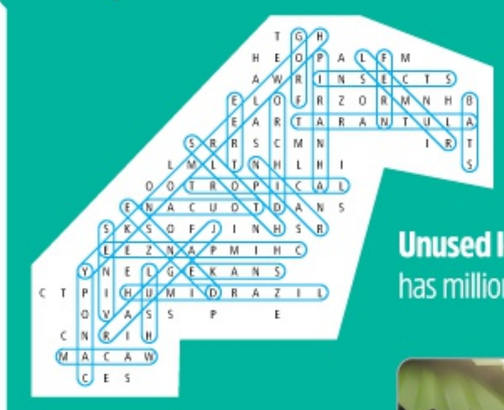
Puzzle answers (from page 26)

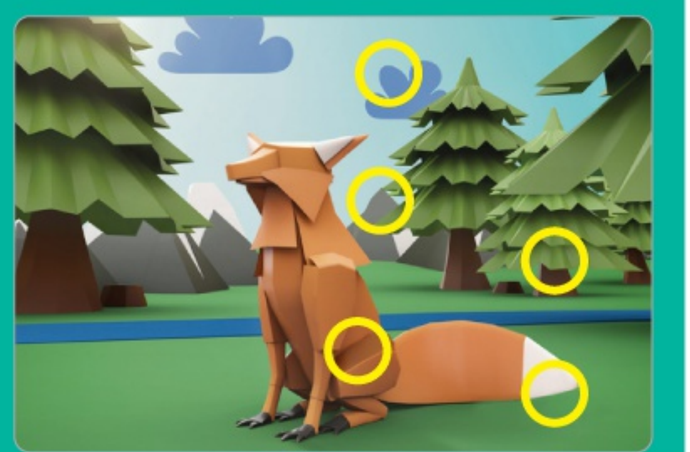


Off sides
being
Heinz
veins

Fill in the blanks
1. voice, ice
2. postage, stage
3. through, rough

Unused letters: The Amazon has millions of insect species.

			4 1
			9 7
		6	2 5
	3	8	



Quiz answers (from page 30)

1 b) Badminton **2** False. It is harvest gold. **3** a) Green jay **4** Five **5** False. No glue is used in origami. **6** Oliphos **7** True **8** b) Jaws **9** Labubu **10** c) VJ Edgecombe **11** c) Ra's al Ghul **12** True **13** b) 2015 **14** *Bluey* **15** True

We want to hear from you! To have your letters, photos, nominations, recommendations, or ideas considered for inclusion in the magazine, please include your first name, age, and state with your submission. By emailing your submission to us, you give *The Week Junior* consent to publish it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending anything to us.

GETTY IMAGES; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES

Quiz

How much of this week's news can you remember?

1 A four-legged, one-armed robot recently played what sport against a human opponent?

a) Tennis b) Badminton c) Pickleball

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

2 True or false? The 1979 Barbie Dreamhouse that is on display at the *Dollhouses Unveiled* exhibit is pink.

True ☐ False ☐

3 A woman in Texas photographed the first wild hybrid between a blue jay and what other bird?

a) Green jay b) Cardinal c) Magpie

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

4 How many medals did the US win at this year's World Artistic Gymnastics Championships?

5 True or false? Origami is made by folding paper into shapes and gluing them together.

True ☐ False ☐

6 In the book *Dragonborn*, who takes Alex to an island where she can share her dragon heritage with others?

7 True or false? At age 17, Jordan Stolz was the third-youngest American to compete in men's Olympic long-track speed skating.

True ☐ False ☐

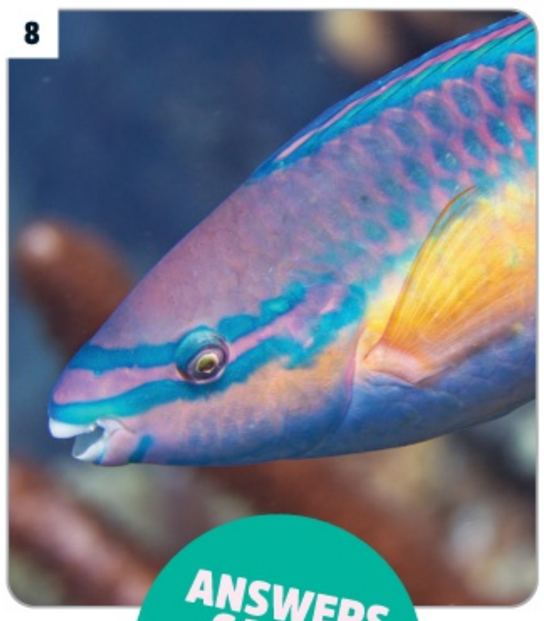
8 Parrotfish produce sounds with which part of their body?

a) Fins b) Jaws c) Ribs

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

11

8



13

4

5

ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 29.

9 This year's Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade will have a new float featuring what popular plush toy?

10 Which NBA rookie scored 34 points in his first regular-season game this season?

a) Cooper Flagg

b) Dylan Harper

c) VJ Edgecombe

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

11 In the new show *Bat-Fam*, who is Damian Wayne's grandfather?

a) Two-Face

b) Mr. Freeze

c) Ra's al Ghul

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

12 True or false? Scientists received an Ig Nobel Prize for discovering that the rainbow lizard's favorite food is four-cheese pizza.

True ☐ False ☐

13 In what year did Misty Copeland become the principal dancer of the American Ballet Theatre?

a) 2001 b) 2015 c) 2021

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

14 A medley of music from which animated series is featured in the video game Just Dance 2026 Edition?

15 True or false? YouTuber Max Fosh traveled 28 miles across the sea in a bathtub.

True ☐ False ☐

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The Week Junior (ISSN 2689-9027) is published weekly, except January 3, January 10, July 11, and September 12. *The Week Junior* is published by Future US LLC, 130 West 42nd Street, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10036.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices.
POSTMASTERS: Send change of address to *The Week Junior,* PO Box 37595, Boone, IA 50037-7595.

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